THE EXISTENTIALISM OF MARTIN BUBER AND IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

DISSERTATION

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By

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This thesis is dedicated to significant others,
to warm, vital, concerned people
Who have meant much to me and have helped me achieve my self,
To people whose lives and beings have manifested "glimpses" of the
Eternal Thou,
To my wife, Sharyn, and my children, Seth and Debra.

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INTRODUCTION

What are the alternatives to philosophies of education which emphasize a certain concept of the child, or language analysis, or the use of reason, or the "scientific method," or a lock-step sequence of attitudes or central organizing-concepts? In my view, the so-called "romantic critics" seem to be voices crying out in and against the wilderness of American education. It may be a gross oversimplification to say so, but Freidenberg's Growing Up in America, and The Vanishing Adolescent, Henry's Culture Against Man, and, most recently, Kozol's Death At An Early Age, clearly point out the dangers inherent in educational institutions which have no real alternatives to philosophies of education whose summum bonum is reason, language and mathematics skills, the development of the critical faculties of mind, or the discovery of certain basic concepts.

The importance of philosophy of education alternatives for the religious school was increased by my experiences during the last week of December, 1967. I attended the Annual Convention of the National Association of Temple Educators. I was somewhat dismayed to hear the best educators in the Reform Jewish movement defending testing, failing, fixed-concept curricula, and a proposed new curriculum, which will be theologically and conceptually oriented, on the grounds that the public schools are doing it! Are there no alternatives to these approaches? Will Religious Education in America be a "monkey see, monkey do" game? Has the religious educator of any denomination a choice?

Martin Buber's thinking may provide such an alternative or choice.

The riots, civil, and social unrest in America in 1967, the details and causes of which are set forth in the *Report of The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*, urgently pose significant questions for the educator. Specifically, does education have a function in creating the "better society"? Upon what principles, goals, or attitudes is it based, and can education help realize those principles? Martin Buber's thinking may offer positive, unique, and stimulating answers to this issue.

This thesis has specific aims. First, Martin Buber will be placed into the general category of a religious existentialist. To support my view that this is an accurate description of his thought in general, chapter one will summarize his views in several areas: philosophical anthropology, the I-Thou relationship, existentialism, and his interpretation of the Hasidic movement in Judaism.

Having done so, each of the next four chapters will deal with a specific area of his thought: epistemology, ethics, religion, and his social views. In each of these chapters I intend to follow a similar method. I will first present Buber's views in that area, e.g., epistemology; next I will state the implications of his views for education or the problems in his thought that preclude such implications being drawn with any degree of certainty or clarity.

In the concluding chapter I will present what I consider to be the central implications for education that flow from Buber's views. Also, I will endeavor to point out how Buber, or one who is favorably inclined toward Buber's form of religious existentialism, might defend himself against a major criticism, i.e., is there any criterion for distinguishing between a true and a delusory I-Thou relationship and the resulting confirmed-meaning or ethical sense of 'Go thou'?

The above is the method which I will apply in this study of a great thinker whose greatest contribution, with implications for education, was the concept of the I-Thou attitude or posture. As will be further explicated, Buber contended that man can take one of two postures, termed the I-Thou and the I-It, toward men, nature or spiritual beings. The I-Thou is characterized by directness, intensity, mutuality, immediacy and ineffability; the other is confirmed, and one's self or person comes to be wholly and fully. Thus, one achieves true self by relating with others. The I-It denotes use and experience, analysis, the microscope, the detached, the dehumanized and uninvolved view.

I will apply this basic pattern to epistemology, ethics, religion and Buber's social views with especial concern for educational implications. Thus, in the chapter on epistemology, I will treat Buber's views concerning the use of a text, how a teacher aids the student to be the living truth, and the interrelationship of objective I-It knowledge and I-Thou knowledge.

In the chapter on ethics, I will attempt to develop Buber's contention that each person determines what is right or wrong in the situation on the basis of some norm, knowledge of which is obtained through some I-Thou relationship. The involved, complex, and crucial, problem of the relationship of religion, revelation, true and false I-Thou relationships, and ethics, will be presented. This delineation will help to further point out the crucial importance of some criterion for determining whether an I-Thou relation, and its message, is valid or not. On the other hand, the positive implications of Buber's ethical views will appear: e.g., the importance of whole, true, meaningful student-teacher relationships; the achievement of trust, and the role of the teacher as guider-helper, a central ingredient in bringing into being that atmosphere where I-Thou relationships, and all that flows therefrom, can be established.

In the chapter on religion, I will endeavor to explicate the view that being religious and ethical, in many senses, is identical for Buber. Some other basic ideas will be discussed: i.e., religion and ethics entail hallowing the everyday when relating with others in the moment; somewhere and somehow one obtains a norm, an absolute, which is applied in the given moment; faith is trust; believing is meeting. Implications of these contentions for value education will be drawn, and again, the problem of determining the validity of the message will be pointed out.

When discussing Buber's social views, I hope to reach that point where Buber's I-Thou, and his ethical and religious views, combine to support and elucidate the argument that real education is character education (religious education) for the effectuation of society. Buber's support and espousal of religious socialism will be comprehended as entailing character education, individual responsibility, education for community, and ultimately, full acceptance of the present, a basic requirement for having I-Thou relationships.

This work will also aim at manifesting what the author considers to be crucial problems in Buber's religious-existentialism; i.e., distinguishing between true and false I-Thou relationships, since the I-Thou relationship is a vehicle to truth, true being, the ethical norms, God, and whole interhuman relationships; and the problem of how the teacher-student relationship can lead to true, whole being, personal ethical responsibility, living religiousness, and effectuation of community, if the student-teacher relationship is inclusion, a type of I-Thou relationship, not characterized by complete mutuality.

Nevertheless, Buber's positive points are worthy of consideration: people are important; people are responsible; people can be ethical and moral; people can build the better world; education has a significant role in bringing all of this to be. The crucial point is whether one takes the I-Thou posture or not!

CHAPTER I

AN INTRODUCTION TO MARTIN BUBER'S THOUGHT

In this chapter I wish to introduce the reader to some central themes in Martin Buber's thought. I shall present his ideas and various interpretations of his thought as they appear in the writings of his interpreters. It is not my intention to present any "final solutions" to controversial matters. Rather it is my purpose to introduce the reader to Martin Buber's thought, clarifying, elucidating, or interpreting whenever necessary. Once the central themes have been presented, I shall proceed in future chapters to more specific areas of thought, e.g., ethics, and shall emphasize the implications for education that flow from Buber's thought.

Buber has been viewed as an existentialist thinker,[1] a religious thinker,[2] a philosophical anthropologist, a religious existentialist,[3] a unique combination of Jewish optimism and existentialism.[4]

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[1] Paul E. Pfuetze, "Martin Buber and American Pragmatism," The Philosophy of Martin Buber, Vol. XII, Library of Living Philosophers, ed. Maurice Friedman, Paul Arthur Schilpp (LaSalle: Open Court, 1967), p. 515. (Hereafter this volume will be referred to as Library of Living Philosophers).

[2] Malcolm L. Diamond, Martin Buber: Jewish Existentialist (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 12.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Will Herberg (ed.), The Writings of Martin Buber (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), p. 11.

To comprehend the reason for this variety of interpretations, it is important to understand: Buber's thoughts concerning philosophical anthropology; the finest, most definitive expression of his thought, I and Thou;[5] his place in the Existentialist movement; and his views of the Jewish Hasidic movement.

Philosophical Anthropology

Buber discussed Philosophical Anthropology in the essay entitled, "What Is Man?"[6] According to Wheelwright, one of Buber's firmest answers to the question of what is man appeared in the second major division of that essay.[7]

Buber began the essay by citing four questions raised by Kant: "What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope? What is man? . . ."[8]

After a series of arguments he concluded that ". . . Fundamentally all this could be reckoned as Anthropology since the three questions are related to the last."[9]

> And thus in Kant the meaning of the fourth question, to which the first three can be reduced, is what sort of a being is it which is able to know, and ought to do, and may hope? And the

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[5] Diamond, op. cit., p. 12.

[6] Martin Buber, Between Man and Man, trans. R. G. Smith (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1965), pp. 118-206.

[7] Philip Wheelwright, "Buber's Philosophical Anthropology," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 70.

[8] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 119.

[9] Ibid.

> fact that the first three questions can be reduced to this question means that the knowledge of the essence of this being will make plain to me _what_, as such a being, it can know, _what_, as such a being, it ought to do, and _what_, as such a being, it may hope.[10]

Buber felt that Kant never answered the question, as posed above, and that philosophy cannot do so.[11] Philosophy certainly contributes to what one may know, what there is to know, and how one "ought" to act.[12] But the price for being able to do so is "dehumanization."[13] Philosophy "shuts out man in his complex wholeness and considers him only as a bit of nature, . . ."[14] Thus, Buber argued: "What the philosophical disciplines are able to contribute to answering Kant's first three questions, even if it is only by clarifying them, or teaching me to recognize the problems they contain, they are able to do only by _not_ waiting for the answer to the fourth question."[15]

How then should the question "What is man?" be answered? Buber felt that it could be answered only through a "legitimate philosophical anthropology,"[16] which:

> . . . reaches toward a knowledge of whole, real man, who, knows what no being on earth but he can know, that he goes

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[10] _Ibid_., p. 121.

[11] _Ibid_., pp. 121-122.

[12] _Ibid_., p. 122.

[13] _Ibid_.

[14] _Ibid_.

[15] _Ibid_.

[16] _Ibid_.

> the narrow way from birth towards death, tests out what none but he can, a wrestling with destiny, rebellion and reconciliation, and at times even experiences in his own blood when he has joined by choice to another human being, what goes on secretly in others. Philosophical Anthropology is solely intent on knowing man himself.[17]

In contrast to philosophical knowledge obtained through "dehumanization,"[18] Buber argued that philosophical-anthropological-knowledge "is not obtained by remaining on the shore and watching the foaming waves, but one must make the venture and cast one's self in the swim, alert with all one's force, even if a moment, when he thinks he is losing consciousness. In this way, and in no other, does one reach anthropological insight."[19]

A type of self-reflection is required.

> The man who feels himself solitary is the most readily disposed and most readily fitted for the self-reflection of which I am speaking; that is, the man who by nature or destiny or both is alone with himself and his problematic, and who succeeds, in this blank solitude, in meeting himself, and discovering man in his own self and the human problematic in his own. . . . In the ice of solitude man becomes most inexorably a question to himself, and just because the question pitilessly summons and draws into play his most secret life he becomes an experience to himself.[20]

Thus, so far, Buber has informed us that Kant's fourth question, "What is man?" cannot be answered by the philosophical disciplines, logic, epistemology, or metaphysics. Philosophical anthropology is required to answer the question. Part of the process of obtaining philosophical-anthropological knowledge is self-reflection, i.e., wrestling with one's problematics.

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., p. 122.

[19] Ibid., p. 124.

[20] Ibid., p. 126.

In the second major division of "What is man?" Buber spoke of the relevance of the question in modern times.[21] This has come about for two reasons. First, there is decay in the life of man with man, in the family, in the community, and in inter-human relationships.[22] Secondly, advances in economy, politics and technology, have brought about a condition in which "man faced the terrible fact that he was the father of demons whose master he could not become. And the question about the meaning of this simultaneous power and powerlessness flowed into the question about man's being, which now received a new and tremendously practical significance."[23]

There have been two modern attempts to answer the question, both of which were rejected by Martin Buber. He offered his refutation of individualistic anthropology, an anthropology which is substantially concerned with the relation of the human person to himself.[24] On the other hand, Buber did not favor the collectivist attempt to answer the question. "Here the human being tries to escape his destiny of solitude by becoming completely imbedded in one of the massive modern group formations."[25] "Man in a collective is not man with man."[26]

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[21] Ibid., p. 157.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., pp. 158-159.

[24] Ibid., pp. 199-200.

The subject proposed as the answer to the question "What is man?" was: man with man.[27]

This view was reached through the following arguments.

> Only the man who realizes in his whole life with his whole being the relations possible to him helps us to know man truly. Since the depths of the question about man's being are revealed only to the man who has become solitary, the way to the answer lies through the man who overcomes his solitude without forfeiting its questioning power. This means that a new task in life is set to human thought here, a task that is new in its context of *life*. For it means that the man who wants to grasp what he himself is, salvages the tension of solitude and its burning problematic for life in this world, a life that is renewed in spite of all, and out of this new situation proceeds with his thinking. Of course this presupposes the beginning of a new process of overcoming the solitude--by reference to which that special task of thought can be perceived and expressed. . . .[28]

Buber then argued that the sphere which is established with the existence of man with man, but which is conceptually uncomprehended, is the sphere of "between."[29] "Between" is a primal category of human reality.[30] It is here that the genuine third alternative to individualism and collectivism begins.[31]

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[25] *Ibid.*, p. 201.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 203.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 201.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 203.

[30] *Ibid.*,

[31] *Ibid.*

Buber attempted to explain the "Between" in the following way. When two individuals come up "against one another,"[32] "the sum does not exactly divide, there is a remainder, somewhere, where the souls end and the world has not yet begun, and this remainder is what is essential."[33] What occurs to two individuals who "happen"[34] to one another, does not merely occur to them, or in them, but it takes place between them "in the most precise sense, as it were in a dimension which is accessible only to them both."[35] "Where I and Thou meet, there is the realm of the 'between.'"[36]

The reality of the between provides the starting point for the philosophical science of man. The central subject of this science is neither the individual nor the collective, but man with man. That essence of man which is special to him can be directly known only in a living relation.[37]

On the basis of his study, Friedman argued that Buber's philosophical anthropology was an extension and development of his philosophy of dialogue.[38] Philosophical anthropology, as the study of the "Wholeness of Man,"[39] deals with significant problems: ". . . Man's special place in the cosmos, his connection with destiny, his relation to the world of things, his understanding of his fellow men, his existence as a being that knows it must die, his attitude in the ordinary and extra ordinary encounters with the mystery with which his life is shot through . . ."[40] Friedman elucidated his interpretation when he argued that Buber defined man as the creature capable of entering into living relation,[41] with men, both as individuals and as the many, and with the mystery of being, which is dimly apparent through all this but instantly transcends it.[42] Hence, the study of man involves the study of man as a being who relates to others not only technically, but as one who turns to others in their essential life.[43]

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[32] _Ibid_., p. 204.

[33] _Ibid_.

[34] _Ibid_.

[35] _Ibid_.

[36] _Ibid_.

[37] _Ibid_., p. 205.

[38] Martin Buber, _Knowledge of Man_, trans. M. Friedman and R. G. Smith (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 13.

According to another of Buber's interpreters, philosophical anthropology has religious implications.

> Since personhood essentially involves, both in existence and in its adequate conception, relationship to other persons, and since every genuine relationship is a relationship not with the crust of another's personality but with other's power of responding and meeting, which is to say with the divinity that is the very core of that other person, it follows that the study of personhood necessarily

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[39] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 120.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Buber, Knowledge of Man, op. cit., p. 15.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid., p. 16.

> involves a study or at least a questioning of that which transcends the personal, as the divine does the human. In short, philosophical anthropology implies, without prescriptive dogma, theology.[44]

I And Thou

Diamond held the view that Buber's I And Thou was the most definitive expression of his thought, from which he never really deviated in later writings.[45]

I And Thou begins with the statement: "To man the world is twofold, in accordance with his twofold attitude."[46] This was interpreted to mean that "The two attitudes that man can direct toward the world must not be taken merely psychologically. What is indicated by the term attitude is the fundamental posture, a way of setting the self toward the world and any of the beings one meets within it."[47]

In addition, Buber stated: "All real living is meeting."[48] If "attitude," in accord with which the world is twofold to man, implies a way of "setting the self toward the world and any of the beings one meets within it,"[49] a relationship between meeting, real living, and the fundamental posture which one takes toward the world and things is evident. This appears to be one of the central points which Buber made in I And Thou.

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[44] Wheelwright, op. cit., p. 85.

[45] Diamond, op. cit., p. 12.

[46] Martin Buber, I And Thou, trans. R. G. Smith (2d ed. with a Postscript by the author; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 3.

[47] Diamond, op. cit., pp. 20-21.

[48] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 11.

[49] Diamond, op. cit., p. 20.

The two fundamental attitudes of relation are expressed by the primary terms: I-It and I-Thou.[50] Friedman expressed the view that if man is to be understood in terms of relations (Verhältnis), then man is to be understood specifically in terms of that direct, mutual relation (Beziehung) that makes him truly and wholly man.[51] Furthermore, it is the I-Thou relation which brings about whole being.[52] This point was made, e.g., in Buber's argument that when one says It to the world, the I included in I-It can never be spoken with "whole being;" however, when one says Thou to the world the I included in the expression I-Thou can be spoken with "whole being."[53]

To help clarify these difficult notions, a brief summary of the chief characteristics of the I-Thou relation follows. On the basis of his study, Pfuetze concluded that the following are those basic characteristics: wholeness, exclusiveness, presentness, directness, genuine responsibility, and love.[54] I am inclined to accept Pfuetze's description.

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[50] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 3.

[51] Maurice S. Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), p. 61.

[52] Buber, I And Thou, loc. cit.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Paul E. Pfuetze, Self, Society, Existence (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), pp. 153-156.

What do these terms mean when applied to the I-Thou relation? Wholeness indicates that when an I has addressed a Thou it has done so with the whole of its being, as a unity, as a unified being. In contrast to the I-It, one has not faced the other with only a facet of his being, e.g., mind, emotions or senses.[55]

In order for there to be a true I-Thou relation, the Thou has to be addressed exclusively. The Thou and the moment have to be given complete concentration. One chooses that other over all others.[56]

Presentness appears to be a characteristic which is essential. "The real, filled present, exists only insofar as actual presentness, meeting, and relation exist."[57] Presentness seems to imply that one is completely open, that one accepts the moment and the other, as they are, and responds with the whole of one's being to the particular demands of that given moment.[58]

Also the I-Thou relation is direct. "The Thou is an end in itself, and no mediation of sense, ideas or fancy is necessary."[59] In the I-Thou relation, every means is an obstacle. Fully accepting the moment, approaching it with openness and presentness, one can then address the other as Thou directly.[60]

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[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 19.

[58] Pfuetze, loc. cit.

[59] Ibid., p. 154.

Mutuality is another significant characteristic. It involves response and responsibility.[61] There can be no I-Thou relationship unless both partners respond to the address of the other and feel genuinely responsible one unto another.[62] Buber characterized such responding and responsibility of an I for a Thou as love.[63] Love, therefore, was viewed as between an I and Thou, in the communion between person and person.[64]

There are some other points concerning the I-Thou relationship that I wish to emphasize. If one accepts what Buber has said of himself, the assertions made in I And Thou are not to be considered as absolute, dogmatic statements. Buber himself stated that no prescription leads to the I-Thou relationship, and none leads from it.[65] Buber felt that he had no absolute dogmatic position:

> I have occasionally described my standpoint to my friends as the "narrow ridge." I wanted by this to express that I did not rest on the broad upland of a system that includes a series of sure statements about the absolute, but on a narrow rocky ridge between the gulfs where there is not sureness of expressible knowledge but the certainty of meeting what remains undisclosed.[66]

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[60] *Ibid*.

[61] *Ibid*.

[62] *Ibid*.

[63] *Ibid*.

[64] *Ibid*.

[65] Buber, *I And Thou*, *op. cit*., p. 111.

[66] Buber, *Between Man and Man*, *op. cit*., p. 184.

Furthermore, Buber expressed the view that he had no intention in I And Thou "to point to mysteries" that can only be discerned by an elite.[67] "The life of dialogue is not the privilege of intellectual activity like dialectic. It does not begin in the upper story of humanity. It begins no higher than where humanity begins. There are not gifted and ungifted here, only those who give themselves and those who withhold themselves."[68] Also, Buber felt that it would be a misunderstanding to consider the I-Thou as an activity reserved for special occasions that are removed from the routine of everyday life.[69] "You put before me the man taken up with duty and business. Yes, precisely him I mean, him in the factory, in the shop, in the office, in the mine, on the tractor, at the printing press . . . dialogue is not an affair of spiritual luxury. . . ."[70]

Also, as Pfuetze has pointed out, one of the central contributions of Martin Buber is the concept of the "social self."[71] That is, "The self is a being in community."[72] "Selfhood is an achievement, achieved through relating to others, because, all real living is meeting."[73]

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[67] Diamond, op. cit., p. 29.

[68] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 35.

[69] Diamond, loc. cit.

[70] Buber, Between Man and Man, loc. cit.

[71] Pfuetze, "Martin Buber and American Pragmatism," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 529.

[72] Ibid., p. 532.

[73] Ibid., p. 533.

> The encounters with the eternal thou are like all I-Thou encounters; the presence of the other is the bearer of meaning, but they yield no objective contents. Buber uses an analogy from the domain of art to explain the sense in which we may speak of one God when all we experience is a sequence of encounters. To understand a poem we must let it speak to us in its own unique terms, but when we read a series of poems by the same author, we understand more than the individual poems, we come to an understanding of the poet. "In such a way, out of the givers of the signs, the speakers of the words in lived life, out of the moment Gods there arises for us with a single identity the Lord of the voice, the One."[75]

Let Buber speak for himself:

> To every sphere in its own way, through each process of becoming that is present to us we look out toward the fringe of the eternal thou; in each we are aware of a breath from the eternal thou; in each thou we address the eternal thou.[76]

On the basis of what he proposed in I And Thou, i.e., the concept of the social-self, the self as achieved in community with others, and the idea that every I-Thou relationship is a glimpse of the eternal Thou, it has been argued that Buber was a "thoroughly religious thinker."[77] "He is not a poet but a thinker--one of the leading religious thinkers of our age."[78] Diamond interpreted this to mean that Buber was neither an academic philosopher nor a professional theologian: rather he was one who was more interested in the everyday encounters of man with the world.[79]

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[75] Diamond, op. cit., p. 41. He cites Between Man and Man, p. 15.

[76] Buber, I And Thou, p. 6, also see p. 75.

[77] Diamond, op. cit., p. 3.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.

Diamond felt that this view of Buber could be supported by observing the way Buber acted among groups of philosophers or theologians.[80] Whenever a professional theologian or philosopher asked him a question, for example, attempting to discover if he were a panpsychist,[81] or if the I-Thou relationship with a tree could really be achieved,[82] Buber always turned the question back to the asker. He asked his questioner to search his own life, e.g., to see whether he could recall any experience in which a facet of nature arrested and engrossed him by the power of its uniqueness.[83] "Then and only then can Buber and his questioner talk, and necessarily in philosophical terms, of what transpired and of its significance for human existence."[84]

Martin Buber And Hasidism

Diamond also expressed the view that although there are clear similarities to certain tendencies of existential thought in Buber's writings and thought,[85] "the fusion of existential thinking with the world-affirming spirit of Judaism is Martin Buber's great contribution to contemporary intellectual life."[86]

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[80] Ibid., p. 4.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid., pp. 18-19.

[86] Ibid., pp. 20-21.

Diamond noted that it has been recognized that the teachings of the Hasidic movement have influenced Buber's thought.[87] On the other hand it should be pointed out that Buber's reading of Hasidism was highly selective.[88] "His primary concern has been to convey the power and profundity of the best elements of the movement and not to present a balanced historical study of its development."[89] As Buber studied the teachings and the legends of the Hasidic sages, he refracted the light of their concepts with his own peculiar intensity. He has emphasized and adapted those aspects of the Hasidic teachings that bear most directly on our contemporary problems.[90]

Hasidism was that religious movement which seized Eastern European Jewry about the middle of the eighteenth century.[91] The term "Hasid" refers to one who is loyal to the covenant, or "those who are truly pious."[92]

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[87] Ibid., p. 90.

[88] Ibid., p. 112. A case could be made that Buber's views of Hasidism are more than "highly selective." For example, the reader is referred to Rivkah Schatz-Uffenheimer's essay in Library of Living Philosophers, pp. 403-434. The author manifested the relationship between Buber's ideas of Hasidism and other sources of the Hasidic movement. She attempted to point out the differences between Buber's view of the movement and how other sources appear to represent the movement. For purposes of this thesis, the reader is asked to keep in mind that it is not my intention to settle the question whether Buber correctly or incorrectly interpreted the Hasidic movement. It is my intention to see how he did interpret the movement. What did he conceive the movement to be? Having answered this question, I am attempting to then correlate his interpretation of the movement with his other views, e.g., as set forth in I And Thou.

[89] Ibid., p. 122.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ronald Gregor Smith, Martin Buber (Richmond: John Knox Press,1967), p. 12.

Of this movement Buber wrote: "In an otherwise not very productive century, even in Eastern Europe, the 'unenlightened' Polish and Ukranian Jewry brought forth the greatest phenomenon in the history of the spirit, greater than any individual genius in art and in thought: a society that lives by its faith."[93]

Leaders of this society, Zaddikim, holy or righteous men, "men who stood the test,"[94] attracted disciples and formed little communities throughout the area. The teachings of the group were transmitted from the righteous ones to their disciples within the community.[95]

On the basis of his study of the movement, Buber argued that one of its central teachings was the concept of "holy insecurity."[96] This concept of faith is the very opposite of any security of salvation.[97] The key to this "holy insecurity" is the "ever-anew"[98] of each concrete situation as opposed to the "once-

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[92] Ibid.

[93] Martin Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism, trans. Maurice Friedman (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1960), p. 27.

[94] Smith, op. cit., p. 12.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism, op. cit., p. 13.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid.

or-all with which man tries to abstract himself from the concrete."[99] A probable relation between I And Thou and Hasidic teachings may occur in the idea that lived concreteness, the "ever-anew," according to Buber's interpretation of Hasidic teachings, exists only insofar as the moment retains its true dialogical character, presentness, and uniqueness.[100]

Another key concept proposed by the Hasidic movement and utilized by Buber was that of redemption of evil. Another connection between I And Thou and Hasidic teachings may appear in Buber's interpretation that Hasidism taught: "Redemption does not take place within the individual soul but in the world through the real meeting of God and man. Everything is waiting to be hallowed by man, for there is nothing so crass or base that it cannot become material for sanctification."[101]

> The decisive step is thereby taken to the renewal of the relation to reality. Only on the path of true intercourse with the things and beings does man attain to true life, but only on this path can he take an active part in the redemption of the world.[102]

Also, I present the following to point out another probable relationship between Hasidism, as Buber understood it, and some of his ideas about religion as expressed in I And Thou:

> Genuine religious movements do not want to offer man the solution of the world of mystery, but to equip him to live

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[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid., pp. 16-17. (The underlining is mine).

[102] Ibid., p. 86. (The underlining is mine).

> from the strength of the mystery; do not wish to instruct him about the nature of God, but to show him the path on which he can meet God. But among them it is the third type (the Hasidic movement, the community of faith) of which I spoke that is most especially concerned not with a universal valid knowledge of what is and what ought to be but only about the here and now of the human person, the eternally new shoot of the eternal truth. . . .[103]

This should be compared with his views expressed in I And Thou: "All real living is meeting,"[104] and, "In each Thou, we catch a breath from the eternal Thou."[105]

The above series of passages may manifest Buber's refraction of the light of Hasidism. The probable links between some of the ideas in I And Thou and his interpretation of Hasidism are the basis, I feel, for the argument that Buber blended existentialism (I And Thou) and Judaism (his interpretation of Hasidism).

Buber And Existentialism

Walter Kaufmann began his introduction to his work on existentialism with these words:

> Existentialism is not a philosophy but a label for several widely different revolts against traditional philosophy. Most of the living "existentialists" have repudiated this label, and a bewildered outsider might well conclude that the only thing they have in common is a marked aversion for each other. To add to the confusion, many writers of the past have frequently been hailed as members of this movement, and it is extremely doubtful whether they would

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[103] Ibid., pp. 116-117. (The underlining is mine).

[104] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 11.

[105] Ibid., p. 108.

> have appreciated the company to which they are consigned. In view of this, it might be argued that the label "existentialism" ought to be abandoned altogether.[106]

Noting that there is not agreement on essentials, and noting that various thinkers and writers from Jaspers to Pascal, Kafka, and Camus, have been included in the movement, Kaufmann then stated that "one essential feature shared by all these men is their perfervid individualism."[107]

Furthermore, he argued:

> The refusal to belong to any school of thought, the repudiation of the adequacy of any body of beliefs whatever, and especially of systems, and a marked dissatisfaction with traditional philosophy as superficial, academic, and remote from life--that is the heart of existentialism.[108]

If one is prone to accept Kaufmann's interpretation that one of the essentials of the existential movement is its "perfervid individualism,"[109] then Martin Buber, with his great concern for the whole man, especially in relation with others, could be considered an existentialist. Also, it has already been noted that Buber claimed that he had no system, but walked the "narrow ridge."[110] Hence, if one is prone to accept Kaufmann's argument that two key points of the of the existential movement are its interest in man, and its anti-system tone, Buber, agreeing with these two, could be classified as an existentialist. Yet, it is important to keep in mind Diamond's view that Buber was a religious existentialist, one who fused existential thinking with some of the religious concepts of Judaism.[111]

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[106] Walter Kaufmann, Existentialism from Dosteovsky to Sartre, original translations by and edited by Walter Kaufmann (Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, 1964), p. 11.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Ibid., p. 12.

[109] Ibid., p. 11.

[110] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 184.

The above is not intended to gloss over the differences that Martin Buber had with other thinkers who have been classified as existentialists. In the next lines, I wish to show how one could argue that Martin Buber is an existentialist, showing how he is similar to other existentialists, and also point out how he differed from some existentialist thinkers in significant ways.

In an article on existentialism,and its implications for education, Harper stated: "Existentialism is concerned about the unfolding of the individual as a whole in the situation in which he finds himself. This implies two things: First, that there is some sense in speaking of the individual as a whole, of man as a whole, and, second, that individuals cannot be considered independently of their situations."[112] Recalling Buber's insistence that the legitimate science of philosophical anthropology deals with the wholeness of man, affinities between his philosophical anthropology and Harper's existentialism appear.

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[111] Diamond, op. cit., p. 20.

[112] Ralph Harper, "Significance of Existence and Recognition for Education," Modern Philosophies and Education, Fifty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 223.

Similarly, Morris presented the following view of existentialism.

> This is what existentialism proposed to do: examine the meaning of human life. As such, it is the kind of philosophy which addresses each one of us--you, the reader, and me, the author--in the most personal ways. It asks us to ask ourselves what significance we can attach to our presence in the world. This is a sobering assignment, and quite probably an unpleasantness slowly turns to a new and somehow deeper sense of what it means to be a man. If existentialism must begin in agony, it is capable of issuing in exhilarating sensations of human power. It is these affirmative thrusts of the philosophy which have been too much overlooked and which shall therefore be accentuated in this discussion.
>
> Because Existentialism asks the kinds of questions it does, its rhetoric differs from that of other philosophies.
>
> Existentialism is more interested in particulars than in universals. It is more interested in trying to fathom the import of a single human life than in coming to some grand category which allegedly explains the "All" and the "One."
>
> It discusses the subjective. And since the subjective is, in a manner of speaking, undiscussable there is need to involve the services of metaphor, allegory, and symbol.[113]

There appear to be other similarities between what Morris depicted as existentialism and Buber. For example, personalism is evident in both Morris' views and in Buber's emphasis of living a whole life qua person.[114] Buber _is_ more interested in particulars than in universals, and Buber often invokes the services of metaphor, allegory, and symbol. Indeed, his _I And Thou_ has been described as a form of poetry.[115]

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[113] Van Cleve Morris, _Existentialism in Education_ (New York: Harper and Row Press, 1966), pp. 4-5.

[114] Buber, _I And Thou_, _op. cit_., pp. 62-65.

[115] Diamond, _op. cit_., p. 3.

Buber's views also have affinities to Kneller's interpretation of existentialism. Kneller argued that existentialism holds that man is "inserted into the world and faces a determinant situation."[116] "But it is his situation, and it involves him in an incomplete and open reality, filled only in part by his special connections with other men. Heidegger's 'togetherness,' Jasper's 'communication,' and Marcel's 'Thou' are examples of this concept."[117]

The phrase "filled only in part by his special connections with other men" may point to differences between Buber and the existentialist cited by Kneller. Buber would not agree that reality is "filled only in part by his special connections with other men" for two reasons. He argued that we can have special relationships with the Eternal Thou, and things, as well as men.[118] And, secondly, it is entirely, and not just in part, through these special connections with these three spheres that reality is disclosed to us.[119]

I trust that the above paragraphs point out affinities between Buber's views and those of other existentialists. On the other hand, Buber significantly differed with certain existentialists. For example, Buber did not agree with Kierkegaard's statement: "The crowd is untruth."[120] Also, he argued vehemently against Kierkegaard's view that the only relation which is desirable is man's relation to God.[121] Also, as I shall point out in Chapter III, Buber's ethical views differed from those of certain existentialists, e.g., Sartre who argued that values are invented, whereas Buber argued that values are discovered, of course, through an I-Thou relationship.

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[116] George Kneller, Existentialism and Education, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1958), pp. 25-26.

[117] Ibid., p. 26.

[118] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 6.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Buber, Between Man and Man, p. 50.

Conclusion

Having delineated Buber's concept of philosophical anthropology, the primary ideas of I And Thou, a religious explication of personalism, how he was influenced by his views of Hasidism, and how he has affinities and differences with existential thinkers, I am inclined to accept Diamond's succinct depiction of Martin Buber. On the basis of his study of the sources, Diamond was led to believe that Buber was a religious thinker, who fused the thinking of the existential movement with the affirmative spirit of the Hasidic movement, or with what Buber found in the Hasidic movement.[122]

Having presented some of Martin Buber's basic thoughts, and the background thereof, I proceed to a further and more complete delineation of certain areas of his thought, e.g., epistemology, ethics, religion, and social views, with particular emphasis upon the implications of those views for education.

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[121] Ibid., pp. 50-58.

[122] Diamond, op. cit., pp. 3, 19, 20.

CHAPTER II

EPISTEMOLOGY

What is true? What is truth? How can we know the truth? In this chapter I will attempt to show Buber's answer to these questions. I shall then attempt to set forth the implications of his views for education.

What Is Truth?

Concerning Buber's concept of truth, Paul E. Pfuetze has this to say:

> By existential thinking, Buber means that participation is the essence of truth; he means that truth must be discovered and confirmed by the whole being and with one's very life in pledge. It is this which sets him in unalterable opposition to all philosophies which seek for the essence of things in abstraction from the concrete reality of our personal existence in the lived-life. This is a way of thinking that hopes to win some truth and certainty and freedom through decision, involvement, the venture and risk of faith. It is subjective, to transcend personal limitations and to solve personal problems especially in those predicaments of men where discursive thought only builds up paradoxes. When the meaning of life is at stake, when one is seeking what he can live and die for, he places his whole self at the disposal of what he has faith in.[1]

Buber himself wrote:

> Any genuine life-relationship to Divine Being, i.e., any such relationship affected with a man's whole being--is a human truth and man has no other truth. To realize this does not

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[1] Paul E. Pfuetze, "Martin Buber and American Pragmatism," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 515.

> mean to relativize truth. The ultimate truth is one but it is given to man only as it enters, reflected as in a prism, and to the true life-relationships of the human persons. We have, and yet have it not, in its multi-colored reflection. "The True, which is identical with the Divine, can never be perceived by us directly; we can only contemplate it in its reflection, and the example, the symbol." Human truth is not conformity between a thing thought and the thing as being; it is participation in Being. It cannot claim universal validity, but it is lived, and it can be lived exemplary symbolically . . .[2]

Since Buber contended that the I-Thou relationship is the access to "Betweenness," the locus where being is realized,[3] and since truth is "participation in Being," comprehending the I-Thou relationship is basic for knowing the truth.

> The I-Thou relationship consists in confronting a being external to one's self, i.e., one which is radically other, and to recognize it as such. This recognition of otherness is not recognition of the _idea_ of otherness. To have an idea of something is appropriate to the I-It relation. What is important is not thinking _about_ the other, even _as other_, but of directly confronting it and of saying Thou to it. Hence, a real access to otherness of the other does not consist in a perception but in Thou-saying, and this is at once an immediate contact and an appeal which does not posit an object, but of which the object-relation is, in fact, a distortion. . . . The distinction between the experience of an object and a meeting in which one being confronts another, a difference which concerns the nature of the relation itself and not merely of its terms . . . a concern to base human experience on the meeting--these are the fundamental contributions of Buber to the theory of knowledge. It is of spiritual

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[2] Martin Buber, _Pointing The Way_, edited and translated by Maurice S. Friedman (New York: Harper and Row, 1963, pp. 79-80.

[3] Emmanuel Levinas, "Martin Buber and the Theory of Knowledge," _Library of Living Philosophers_, _op. cit._, pp. 139-140.

> significance that this relation to being underlying all of our objective knowledge does not involve an impersonal neutral unity . . . but (it does involve) a Seiendes which is the being of the other, and hence implies a social communion considered as the primary act of being.[4]

Past and Present

Related to the above discussion is Buber's view that there is a significant difference between a world-that-is-ordered and the world-order.[5] In moments of presentness, one can look upon the world order. However, the world-that-is-ordered is the world of the past. This is so because one knows the Thou only in the present; then, in the past, things are coordinated, become It.[6] "The Thou knows no system of co-ordination."[7] "True beings are lived in the present, the life of objects is in the past."[8]

Since it seems clear that the I-Thou posture is the one through which the deep meaning of existence is disclosed, some readers of Martin Buber have thought that the I-It, the past, the realm of use and experience is a negative category in Buber's thinking.[9] I do not think that is the case.

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[4] Ibid., pp. 138-139.

[5] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 31.

[6] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., p. 13.

[9] Diamond, op. cit., p. 22.

First, Buber clearly stated that it is the "melancholy of our fate"[10] that every Thou in our world must become an It.[11] "It does not matter how exclusively present the Thou was in the direct relation, as soon as the relation has been worked out or has been permeated with a means, the Thou becomes an object among objects . . ."[12] "Every Thou in the world is by its nature fated to become a thing or continually to re-enter into the condition of things . . ."[13] "The It is the eternal chrysalis, the Thou the eternal butterfly . . ."[14]

Thus, Buber concluded with this thought:

> It is not possible to live in the bare present. Life would be quite consumed if precautions were not taken to subdue the present speedily and thoroughly. But it is possible to live in the bare past, only indeed in it may life be organized. We only need to fill each moment with experiencing and using, and it ceases to burn.
>
> And in all the seriousness of truth, hear this: Without It man cannot live. But he who lives with It alone is not a man.[15]

Before presenting in detail Buber's concepts concerning I-It knowing and I-Thou knowledge, it is important to emphasize a point upon which Buber insisted. There are no separate realms of I-Thou knowledge and I-It knowledge.[16] Why did Buber hold this view? First, he argued that it is the fate of every meeting with a Thou that it become an It.[17] Thus, if one had an I-Thou relationship, e.g., with one's wife, and wished to express the nature of that relationship, it could only be done in the language of It or in symbolic language. However, the resulting poem should not be considered It knowledge only, for its origin was a true relationship with a Thou and the words should point back to that encounter.[18]

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[10] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., p. 17.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., p. 34.

Also, Buber insisted:

> An I-Thou knowledge that can be held fast, preserved, factually transmitted does not really exist. That which discloses itself to me from time to time in the I-Thou relationship can only become such a knowledge through transmission into the I-It sphere. . . . Every essential knowledge is in its origin contact with an existing being and in its completion possession of an enduring concept.[19]

I-It Knowledge

With these thoughts in mind, ideas concerning I-It knowledge may be clearer and easier to comprehend. In general, Buber expressed the view that I-It knowledge was produced when men primarily experienced and used what they could encounter in relationship.[20] For example, he had the following to say of a man who says I-It:

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[16] Martin Buber, "Replies to My Critics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., pp. 691-692.

[17] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 16.

[18] Ibid., p. 33.

[19] Buber, "Replies to My Critics," op. cit., p. 692.

> . . . With the magnifying glass of peering observation he bends over particulars and objectifies them, or with the field glass of remote inspection he objectifies them and arranges them as scenery. He isolates them in observation without any feeling of their exclusiveness, or he knits them into a scheme of observation without any feelings of universality. . . . He experiences things as sums of qualities. . . . He sets things in space and time, in causal connection, each with its own sphere and appointed course, its measurability and conditioned nature.[21]

Through natural knowledge, social differentiation and technical achievement, the world of objects, the I-It world, is enlarged.[22]

> The primary connection of man with the world of It is comprised in experiencing, which continually reconstitutes the world, and using, which leads the world to its manifold aim, the sustaining relieving and equipping of human life. In proportion to the growing extent of the world of It, ability to experience and use It must also grow. An individual can, to be sure, more and more replace direct with indirect experience, he can "acquire items of knowledge," and he can more and more reduce his using of the world to specialized "utilization"; . . .[23]

Causality has an unlimited reign in the world of It.[24] "Every 'physical' event that can be perceived by the senses, but also every 'psychical' event existing or discovered in self-experience is necessarily valid as being caused and as causing."[25] To Buber this is a significant point because, in his view, "quasi-biological and quasi-historical thought of today"[26] are based upon unlimited causality.[27] Thus, when speaking of the sickness of our age,[28] Buber also discussed the "law of life," the "law of the soul," "social law," and "cultural law," "which means that man is set in the frame of an inescapable happening that he cannot, or can only in his frenzy, resist."[29]

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[20] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 6.

[21] Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[22] Ibid., p. 37.

[23] Ibid., p. 38.

[24] Ibid., p. 51.

Since Buber posited the I-Thou relationship as that which leads to whole, true being, and participation in "Being," presentness, and real living, it is not too early to intimate that an application of Buber's thinking to education would imply a minimal use of subjects or subject matters which emphasize "unlimited causality," the world-that-is-ordered, the world of use and mere experience, at the expense of directness, mutuality, intensity, those qualities which are necessary for true living, the I-Thou relationship.

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[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., p. 56.

[27] Ibid., p. 57.

[28] Ibid., p. 55.

[29] Ibid., p. 56.

Thinking

Buber noted the fact that some men have appealed to a "world of ideas"[30] as a "third factor" above the I-Thou and the I-It attitude.[31] Of such individuals, Buber has said:

> To be sure, many a man who is satisfied with the experience and use of the world of things has raised over or about himself a structure of ideas, in which he finds repose from the on-come of nothingness. . . . The mankind of mere It that is imagined, postulated, and propagated by such a man has nothing in common with a living man-kind where Thou may truly be spoken . . .[32]

Then, quite forcefully, Buber described he who addresses these abstract ideas as "contemptible."[33] However, I am inclined to believe that this argument against the positers of a "world of ideas" should not be interpreted as an attack against any use of reason or thought. Man must organize his life in the past.[34] Also, I will endeavor to point out that thought plays a role in such organization. But what is thought?

In Between Man and Man, Buber attempted to refute the thesis that thought arises in monologue, i.e., that thought is a citadel rising over the life of dialogue,[35] in which man with himself, suffers and triumphs in "glorious solitude.[36] Buber's primary argument was that the arising of thought does not take place in colloquy with one's self. That is only the first "trying and testing of what has arisen."[37] The original arising of thought manifests elements of dialogue.

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[30] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

[35] Buber, Between Man and Man, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-28.

Furthermore, Buber felt that one reaches that level in the stages of thought where dialectic is not a monologue of the solitary thinker with himself, but it becomes a dialogue between I and Thou.[38] That is, while thinking, there arises a longing for a trying and testing in the sphere of pure dialogue and "the function of receiving is given over either to a genuine Thou which either remains one that is thought and yet is felt as supremely living and other, or else is embodied in an intimate person."[39]

Buber also contended that "modern philosophy" significantly modified the concept of thought because it asked its question on the basis of human existence.[40]

> Here it is certainly no longer just that the Thou is ready to receive and disposed to philosophize along with the I. Rather, and pre-eminently, we have the Thou in opposition because we truly have the other who thinks other things in an other way. So, too, it is not a matter of a game of draughts in a tower of a castle in air, but of the binding

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[36] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

[37] *Ibid.*

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] *Ibid.*

> business of life on the hard earth, in which one is inexorably aware of the otherness of the other person but does not at all contest it without realizing it; one takes up its nature into one's own thinking, thinks in relation to it, addresses it in thought.[41]

Thus, in thinking between I and Thou one should live towards the other man, who is not framed by thought but is bodily present before us.[42] Not only do we think about the other, and what he thinks, his ideas, but our thinking should be towards his very person.[43]

Much of what Buber has argued about the nature of thinking seems to relate to his concepts of the I-Thou, his existentialism, his philosophical anthropology. All of these emphasize the importance of the concrete individual, the person, in the concrete situation. Furthermore his pronouncement that the man who addresses ideas as Thous "is contemptible"[44] should be understood not as an argument against thinking, but as an argument against addressing that which does not lead to true whole being as a Thou.

Philosophy

Eclipse of God contains writings concerning the role of philosophy. I feel that the following reveals the central thrust of his view: "Philosophizing and philosophy, . . . begin ever anew with one's definitely looking away from his concrete situation, hence with the primary act of abstraction."[45]

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[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., p. 28.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 14.

Primary abstraction was explained to mean: "The inner action in which man lifts himself above the concrete situation into the sphere of precise conceptualization. In this sphere the concepts no longer serve as a means of apprehending reality, but instead represent as the object of thought being freed from the limitations of the actual."[46]

Buber felt that philosophy is entitled to proclaim "as the highest reward of this necessary abstraction a looking upward--no longer a looking here--at the objects of true vision, the 'ideas.'"[47] This "opticizing of thought"[48] has as its object the universal existence. Hence, Buber concluded: "Philosophy is grounded on the presupposition that one sees the absolute in universals."[49] This process of abstraction, "of opticizing of thought," leads, in Buber's view, to the "actual ever-recurring renunciation of the original relational bond, of the reality which takes place between I and Thou, of the spontaneity of the moment."[50]

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[45] Martin Buber, Eclipse of God (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 38.

[46] Ibid., p. 39.

[47] Ibid., p. 40.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid., pp. 40-41.

Buber recognized the positive role of philosophy:

> Only through the fact that philosophy radically abandoned the relation with the concrete did that amazing construction of an objective thought-continuum become possible, with a static system of concepts and a dynamic one of the problems. Every man who can "think" can enter this continuum through the simple use of his ability, through a thinking comprehension of thought. Only through this is there an "objective" mutual understanding, that is one which does not, like the religious, entail two men's recognizing the other by the personal involvement in life which he has achieved. Instead, both fulfill a function of thought which demands no involvement in life and bear in fruitful dialectic attention between the reciprocal ideas and problems.[51]

Buber reached an important conclusion when he argued that the existent, for man, is either present being or passive object.[52] Since the essence of man develops, or arises, from a two-fold relation to the existent, it implies that there are not two "external phenomena, but two basic modes of existing with being."[53]

> Because there are the two basic modes of our existence with being, they are the two basic modes of our existence in general -- I-Thou and I-It. I-Thou finds its highest intensity and transfiguration in religious reality, in which unlimited Being becomes, as an absolute person, a partner. I-It finds its highest concentration and illumination in philosophical knowledge. In this knowledge the extraction

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[50] Ibid., p. 42.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., p. 44.

[53] Ibid.

> of the subject from the I of the immediate lived togetherness of I and It and the transformation of the It into the object detached in its essence produces the exact thinking of contemplated existing beings, yes, of contemplated being itself.[54]

With the above paragraphs in mind, it should now be even clearer why Buber has been called a religious existentialist or a religious thinker. He emphasized meeting the concrete individual in a concrete situation, thus classifying himself within that broad term, "existentialism." However, he clearly felt that the highest form of I-Thou knowledge is religion, thus classifying himself within that broad term, "religious."

It should be noted that I-It knowledge is not cast aside as totally worthless or valueless. Rather, Buber recognized that in its highest form, philosophy, it serves a basic function, as part of that body of knowledge which gives man the thought-continuum, the world-that-is-ordered, the past, in contradistinction to that which relates to presentness, the world-order, the I-Thou.

I-Thou Knowledge Complemented By I-It

Diamond offered a thought-provoking view when he argued that one could interpret Buber to imply the possibility of "gradations in the I-Thou encounters."[55] He based this upon Buber's argument that one can have an I-Thou relationship with a natural object, e.g., a tree, and not:

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[54] *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

[55] Diamond, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

> . . . give up any of the ways in which I consider the tree. There is nothing from which I would have to turn my eyes away in order to see, and no knowledge that I would have to forget. Rather is everything, picture and movement, species and type, law and number, indivisibly united in this event. Everything belonging to the tree is in this: its form and structure, its color and chemical composition, its intercourse with the elements and with the stars, are all present in a single whole.[56]

"In all of this the tree remains my object, occupies space and time, and has its nature and constitution."[57]

Diamond commented on Buber's concepts:

> The encounter of a musical neophyte with Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, rich though it may be, is less rich than that of a trained musician. Although the musician may not consciously struggle to bring his critical knowledge to bear upon the performance . . . it is still there and operating all the same. While this technical knowledge makes it harder for the musician to "let himself go" at a concert, his Thou encounters, when they occur will be just that much richer. Only one who has actually mastered a discipline, can witness to the deeper fulfillment of subsequent Thou encounters.[58]

To buttress his argument, Diamond cited Buber's I And Thou:

> It is not as though scientific and aesthetic understanding were not necessary; but they are necessary to man that he may do his word with precision and plunge it in the truth of relation, which is above the understanding and gathers it up in itself.[59]

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[56] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

[57] Ibid., p. 7.

[58] Diamond, loc. cit.

[59] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 41f.

Diamond's argument could be significant. It may have implications for interpreting Buber's views on knowing. Consequently, it may have implications for an application of Buber's views of knowledge to education.

There now appear to be three clear and distinct patterns of thought in Buber's writings about knowing. First, there is I-Thou knowing, wherein one embraces the being as a truly and wholly other. Secondly, there is pure I-It knowing, derived from some original I-Thou encounter, which has now been ordered in the past. And, now, as a result of Diamond's interpretation, there appears to be a type of knowledge wherein I-It knowing heightens the possibility of I-Thou encounter and I-Thou knowing.

Living Truth

Buber wrote the following about meaning and the lived concrete.

> That meaning is open and accessible in the actual lived concrete does not mean it is to be won and possessed through any type of analytical or synthetic investigation or through any type of reflection upon the lived concrete. Meaning is to be experienced in living action and suffering itself, in the unreduced immediacy of the moment. . . . Only he reaches the meaning who stands firm, without holding back or reservation, before the whole might of reality and answers it in a living way. He is ready to confirm with his life the meaning which he has attained.[60]

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[60] Buber, Eclipse of God, op. cit., p. 41f.

The concepts of answerability, of confirming with one's life the meaning that has been attained, are significant. It is my view that these ideas are subsumed within the concept of "living truth." Levinas explained that "living truth" designates an existence which can be understood only in terms of its authenticity and its non-authenticity, rather than an existence directed by any true idea.[61]

Related to this existential concept, i.e., that standing firm verifies one's assertions or life and not a correspondence theory of knowledge relating reality to appearance, or language to reality,[62] is Buber's discussion of the word "mean." To "mean" another individual is to "imagine the real."[63] "Imagining the real," meaning another person, is:

> . . . bold swinging--demanding the most intensive stirring of one's being--into the life of the other. . . . The particular real person who confronts me, whom I can attempt to make present to myself just in this way, and not otherwise, in his wholeness, unity, and uniqueness, and with his dynamic center which realizes all these things ever anew.[64]

Friedman interpreted "personal making present" or "imagining the real" to be the basis of that "confirmation" through which we are enabled to become what we are called to become, true persons, who are

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[61] Emmanuel Levinas, "Martin Buber and The Theory of Knowledge," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 144.

[62] Ibid., p. 143.

[63] Buber, The Knowledge of Man, op. cit., p. 81.

[64] Ibid.

"living truth."[65] "True confirmation means that I confirm my partner as this existing being even while I oppose him, I legitimize him over against me as the one with whom I have to do in real dialogue. . ."[66] Related to the concept of living truth, making present, is the existentialist idea of responsibility to the other, or responsibility as the obligation to respond to the other, which seems to be only another term for "true confirmation."[67]

All of these concepts are combined within the idea of "living truth." As corroboration for this, I summarize those pages where Buber discussed what one means by saying: "One speaks the truth."[68] That phrase means: "One says what he means." What then is the meaning of mean?[69] The answer to this question was: "Because he is who he is, he says what he means."[70] That is, there is a unity between meaning, saying, and personal existence itself. "This concrete person, in the life-space allotted to him, answers with his faithfulness for the word that is spoken by him."[71]

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[65] Ibid., p. 28.

[66] Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[67] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., pp. 16-19.

[68] Buber, The Knowledge of Man, op. cit., pp. 119-120.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid., p. 119.

[71] Ibid., p. 120.

It seems, then, that it can be concluded that one then is the "living truth" insofar as he lives authentically. One lives authentically insofar as one is what one is, one means what one is, one confronts the other as the other is, in the other's fullness, wholeness and presentness. One confirms the other as he is, and one speaks the truth when one speaks to the other as the other is.

Buber As An Existentialist-Intuitionist

If one were to place Buber's concepts concerning the nature of knowledge and knowing within one of the traditional philosophic categories, then Rotenstreich's depiction of Buber as an existential-intuitionist-realist seems to be adequate.[72] According to Rotenstreich, Buber's epistemology is existential insofar as Buber contends: "Lived life is tested and fulfilled in the stream alone."[73]

Buber can be considered to be an intuitionist. To support this assertion Rotenstreich pointed out that Buber described philosophy as "primarily an act of abstraction,"[74] and emphasized that the I-Thou relationship, in its highest form, religion, emphasizes meeting with the concrete in the given situation.[75] Also, when speaking of his philosophical anthropology, Buber said: "You do not attain to knowledge by remaining on the shore and watching the forming waves, you must make the venture and cast yourself in . . . in this way, and in no other, do you reach anthropological insight."[76]

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[72] Nathan Rotenstreich, "The Right and the Limitations of Buber's Dialogical Thought," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., pp. 115-119.

[73] Ibid., p. 115, citing Between Man and Man, p. 12.

[74] Ibid., citing Eclipse of God, pp. 38-39.

[75] Ibid., p. 35.

But Buber's intuitionism is not Bergson's intuition.[77] Rotenstreich summarized Buber's opposition to Bergson:

> He (Buber) rightly sees the danger of intuitionism, that is to say, that in an act of intuition, one may get submerged in the amount of intuition without reaching the true reality of the intuitive object which is beyond the moment of presence, i.e., the moment where intuition is performed. . . . Buber shares the intuitionist view as to the non-cognitive or non-conceptual attitude that exists between two human beings in establishing their relationship. Yet he criticizes intuitionism because of the "cognitive atomism" that threatens intuitionism, that is to say, that every act of intuition might be unrelated to the former act or to the subsequent act. Secondly, he criticizes it because of the lack of clear realism in at least some of the intuitionists views: the contact established in and through intuition may lead to the blurring of the independence both of the I and Thou while Buber is very strongly interested in stressing the independent, i.e., realistic position of both partners in the dialogical situation.[78]

Some of Buber's terminology was interpreted to manifest his intuitionist leanings. For example, the use of the term "personal making present" points to an immediate knowledge of the Thou. The direct relation to the Thou is termed "essential" relation by Buber,[79] and this essential relation is thus described: "The two participate in one another's lives in very fact, not physically but ontically."[80]

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[76] Ibid., quoting Between Man and Man, p. 124.

[77] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., pp. 81-86.

[78] Rotenstreich, "The Right and The Limitations of Buber's Dialogical Thought," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 116.

[79] Ibid., p. 117.

Finally, Rotenstreich summarized Buber's realist approach in these words:

> . . . He is anxious to state that the immediate approach between human beings carries with it the knowing and awareness of them without the epistemological distinctions between appearance and reality, thus penetrating, as it were, the walls of mediation and discursive thinking.[81]

Implications for Education

In this section I intend to apply, as far as the evidence warrants, Buber's thoughts about the nature of knowledge and knowing to educational issues.

a) Buber would agree with much of Kneller's contention concerning the existential attitude toward knowledge.[82] Kneller argued that that attitude would "radically affect"[83] the teaching of subjects dependent upon systems of thought or frames of reference: "It states that school subjects are only tools for the realization of subjectivity. Knowledge should be appreciated through the exercise of concern and dread; not through objectivity. . . ."[84] Buber held that I-It can become evil if it is divorced from the original I-Thou encounter which is its kernel of truth and meaning;[85] he would agree that "school subjects are only tools for the realization of subjectivity."[86]

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[80] Ibid., quoting Between Man and Man, p. 170.

[81] Ibid., p. 119.

[82] Kneller, op. cit., p. 63.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

Hence, to speak of subject matter data as some embodied "realm of ideas" or systematic statement of eternal verities would be almost placing one's self in Buber's category of the "contemptible" man. To Buber such an individual was one who addressed the realm of ideas as a Thou.[87]

Subject matter should be understood, then, as a human product, based upon a human encounter, an I-Thou relationship. Buber would approve of that book whose original source is "the life of a man who was present only in a direct way."[88] Since science is primarily objectification, in the past, of an original I-Thou encounter, science is really based on the primal reality of the I-Thou dialogical relationship.[89] Hence, objectified subject matter in a school should point back to the I-Thou knowing on which it is primarily based.[90]

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[85] Diamond, op. cit., p. 22.

[86] Subjectivity for the existentialist is a reference to personal selfhood, and not to subjective feelings. See Sartre, Jean Paul. Existentialism (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947), p. 18.

[87] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 14.

[88] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., p. 7.

[89] Friedman, The Life of Dialogue, op. cit., pp. 171-172.

[90] Ibid.

A British educator, influenced by Buber's thought, argued that the whole concept of the "objectivity" of education is questioned by the fact that a knowledge of things is for the most part mediated through the minds of others and by the fact that real growth takes place "through the impact of person on person."[91]

Buber also felt that science cannot dispense with objectification since science, as such, deals only with objects; however, science can recognize that its discoveries "are themselves products of true scientific 'intuition' or rather 'confrontation'. Objectification necessarily follows this discovery, but it cannot take its place."[92]

Friedman summarized Buber's views in the following way:

> What is necessary, therefore, is that we overcome the tendency to regard the subject-object relation as itself the primary reality. When this false objectification is done away with, the human studies will be in a position to integrate the I-Thou and the subject-object types of knowing. This implies the recognition that subject-object knowledge fulfills its true function only insofar as it retains its symbolic quality of pointing back to the dialogical knowing from which it derives. The way toward this integration has been indicated by Buber himself in his treatment of philosophical anthropology, psychology, education, and social philosophy, myth and history.[93]

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[91] Quoted in Friedman, p. 178, who cites Marjorie Reeves, Growing Up in a Modern Society (London: University of London Press, 1946), pp. 34-38.

[92] Quoted in Friedman, p. 172, and based upon a letter from Dr. Buber to Friedman, December 4, 1952.

[93] Ibid., p. 172.

b) But above all, people are more important than books! Buber contended, in Pointing The Way, that whereas he revered and loved books, he revered and loved men even more! Assuming that one were left in a situation of solitude, and that one had a choice between books or men, Buber contended that he would choose men, for they are the world which truly comes to meet him, the world through which he truly comes to be.[94]

His views were applied. In the experimental adult education classes organized by Martin Buber in Israel for the purpose of educating the new immigrants, the classics, Jewish and otherwise, were taught so that the teachers may become "whole persons able to influence others and not for the sake of the knowledge itself."[95] Buber also insisted that each teacher be prepared to work with each of the new immigrants as unique individuals.[96]

c) Recalling Buber's argument that man cannot live in the present alone, but must live in the past,[97] I feel supported in contending that the I-It relation "is necessary and appropriate to many activities" just as it is.[98]

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[94] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

[95] Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, op. cit., p. 183.

[96] Ibid., p.182.

[97] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p.34.

[98] Diamond, op. cit., p. 22.

> Through knowledge acquired in detachment, man is able to achieve a reliable perspective on the world and a considerable degree of control over nature. It is in the It perspective that physicists all over the world can communicate by means of mathematical symbols that are free of the cultural nuances that haunt words such as "democracy" and "freedom" and makes them susceptible to so many radically conflicting interpretations.[99]

Hence, Buber would recognize the value and importance of mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry, as It-knowledge.

d) Another implication of Buber's theory of knowledge is his concept of "living truth," which has been interpreted to mean that one should be an authentic, responsible answerable, full person, and live the truth, including that truth obtained through an I-Thou relationship, which cannot be expressed in transmittible knowledge.

Diamond argued that when one deals with fundamental questions of human existence, one has no way of rising above the posture of engagement to a more valid perspective. "This is the key to his (Buber's) existential approach to truth."[100] "Human truth becomes real when one tries to translate one's relationship to truth into the reality of one's own life. And human truth can be communicated only if one throws one's self into the process and answers for it with one's self."[101]

To point out the positive implications of personal responsibility, a comparison between Buber's views and Harper's may be useful.

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[99] _Ibid_.

[100] _Ibid_., p. 36.

[101] _Ibid_., p. 114.

Harper argued that existential education should not lead to action, but to thought.[102] He further stated that the rational habits of mind, specifically, mental discipline, the critical mind, and the fertile mind, should be the goals of existential education.[103]

In his discussion of revelation[104] Buber stated that the confirmed meaning of the presence of power (revelation) "does not permit itself to be transmitted and made into knowledge generally current and admissible, . . ."[105] He also stated that we have "known" the mystery through that I-Thou relationship, but we cannot approach others with what we have received and say "you must do this." Then he significantly stated: "We can only go and confirm its truth."[106] I feel that this can be interpreted to mean that it is not sufficient for men to claim that they have truth in some systematic body of ideas. Men must live the truth.

Also, Buber argued that a very important achievement of education is that the student develops trust in the world because of the fact that he learned to trust in an individual, the teacher.[107] The student trusts that there is meaning in the world because there are others in the world. The student interacts with such beings and lives with them: "All real living is meeting."[108] Similarly Buber stated that the intention is not educational but the meeting is.[109]

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[102] Harper, op. cit., p. 242.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., pp. 109-112.

[105] Ibid., p. 111.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 98.

Hence, I feel that a clear picture emerges. Truth is exemplified and lived by a student in the classroom when he is responsible to others, answerable to others, trusts in the world, trusts that there is meaning in the world because of his relationship to other beings in the world. This trust is primarily developed through meeting, for the meeting is educational.

Hence, in contradistinction to Harper, I do not think that Buber would agree that the habits of mind are what the existential philosophy of education emphasizes. Rather, the teacher begins with the individual, with who and what he is, with what the individual lacks, his homelessness, his absorption in the world of It.[110] Then, a primary function of the teacher is to provide those experiences, insofar as the teacher is a selector of the effective world, through which the student meets other beings and, holding his self open for immediacy,[111] has I-Thou encounters, gains meaning, truth, which he then lives in his daily activities with teacher, students, parents, etc.

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[108] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 11.

[109] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 107.

[110] Ibid., p. 115.

[111] Buber, Pointing the Way, op. cit., p. 206.

A Major Problem

There may be a major problem in Buber's thought, and, consequently a primary difficulty in applying his thought to education. For Buber revelation is a type of I-Thou relation in which meaning, to the highest degree, is confirmed. "It is the phenomenon that a man does not pass, from the moment of the supreme meeting, the same being as he entered into it."[112]

Something happened in the man who emerged from the act of pure relation; "he has now in his being something more that has grown in him, . . ."[113] "The reality is that we receive what we did not hitherto have, and receive it in such a way that we know it has been given to us. . . . In the language of Nietzsche . . . 'we take and do not ask who it is there that gives.'"[114]

What man receives is not a specific "content" but a presence as power.[115]

> There is the whole fullness of real mutual action . . . there is the inexpressible confirmation of meaning. Meaning is assured . . . you do not know how to exhibit and define the meaning of life, you have no formula or picture for it, and yet it has more certitude for you than the perception of your senses. . . . (The concealed meaning) wishes only to be done by us . . . this meaning is . . .

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[112] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 109.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid., pp. 109-110.

[115] Ibid., p. 110.

> of this life of ours, . . . of this world of ours, and it desires its confirmation in this life and in relation with this world.[116]

"As no prescription can lead us to the meeting, so none leads from it."[117] No one can tell another individual how to reach the I-Thou encounter, with the beings of the world, men, the realm of nature, or the Eternal Thou, God. Hence, since there is no prescription, no series of steps that can be transmitted about how one is to achieve, to reach the meeting, so no prescription, no ethical "Ought," no body of knowledge, flows from the encounter that is readily transmitted.[118]

One thing, however, was accentuated: "As only acceptance of the presence is necessary for the approach to the meeting, so in a new sense is it so when we merge from it. As we reach the meeting with the simple Thou on our lips, so with the Thou on our lips we leave it and return to the world."[119]

Also leaving the "mystery" of the encountered Thou, we can say that we have "known" It. But we acquired no knowledge from it which might lessen or moderate its mysteriousness.[120] "We cannot approach others with what we have received, and say 'You must know this, you must do this.' We can only go, and confirm its truth. . . ."[121]

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[116] *Ibid*.

[117] *Ibid*., p. 111.

[118] *Ibid*.

[119] *Ibid*.

[120] *Ibid*.

[121] *Ibid*.

With the above in mind, the problem can be raised. How can one determine whether or not knowledge obtained by the I-Thou relationship, knowledge as confirmed meaning, is knowledge, if there are no criteria?[122] This is related to the question of what criteria could be applied to distinguish a "true" I-Thou relationship from a "false" I-Thou relationship.[123] "One critic notes that since Hitler apparently experienced some form of an I-Thou encounter with the German people, Buber had no criterion by which he can discriminate between this and any other instance of an I-Thou relation."[124]

Education, Inclusion, and The Problem of Criterion

Diamond felt that Buber had a criterion. It was his view that Buber valued I-Thou encounters between man and man more highly than those that take place between man and something in the realm of nature, e.g., a tree. "His criterion is the greater degree of mutuality possible in the human encounters. This criterion arises out of the richness of the encounters themselves."[125]

I find a contradiction between what Diamond argued to be the criterion, i.e., mutuality, and Buber's concept that the teacher-pupil relationship is one of inclusion, one, as will be explained, which is not fully mutual. In order to do so, I present Buber's views on "Education."[126]

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[122] Diamond, op. cit., pp. 32-34.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Jacob V. Agus, Modern Philosophies of Judaism (New York: Behrman House, 1941), p. 276, quoted in Diamond, p. 32-33.

[125] Ibid., pp. 35-36.

Buber defined education: "The development of the creative powers in a child."[127] He pointed out that only the last three words in this definition raise no grave philosophic question, and then he defined the other words in his definition.[128]

Child was defined as: "This potentiality, streaming unconquered, however much of it is squandered, is the reality child: this phenomenon of uniqueness, which is more than just begetting and birth, this grace of beginning again and ever again."[129]

Creation is the "divine summons to life hidden in non-being."[130] Buber contended that related to creation is an inborn, natural, and autonomous instinct of origination.[131] Buber rejected that instinct as leading to solitude[132] and argued that the instinct for communion was central to education.[133] Why? He felt that it is only through mutuality, the process wherein a hand is stretched out from one human being to another, and the process wherein the child relates to the world, not as an It, but as a Thou, that the human being can truly create and that the instinct of origination can come to fruition.[134] That is, it is only through communion with a Thou that the powers to create can be stimulated within the child.

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[126] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., pp. 83-103.

[127] Ibid., p. 83.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Ibid., p. 84.

[131] Ibid., p. 85.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Ibid., p. 87.

Thus Buber redefined education:

> A selection by man of the effective world: it means to give decisive effective power to a selection of the world which is concentrated and manifested in the educator. The relation in education is lifted out of the purposelessly streaming education by all things, and is marked off as purpose. In this way, through the educator, the world for the first time becomes the true subject of its effect.[135]

The role of the educator, the teacher, is to enable and to help the student to select the objects in the world which are worthy of his attention and worthy of the process leading to an I-Thou relationship. The teacher aids the child to be able to relate in an I-Thou fashion. Thus, the teacher is one who selects, and helps the child to select, the objects with which he can truly relate and through which he can fully be.[136]

What, however, is the nature of the teacher-pupil relationship that could lead to the accomplishment of such a goal?

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[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid., p. 89.

[136] Ibid., pp. 91-92, 97, 99, 101.

To answer this question, Buber spoke of the phenomenon of "experiencing the other side."[137] He presented the example of a man caressing a woman who lets herself be caressed. The man feels the contact from two sides--with the palm of his hands, and also with the woman's skin.[138]

Then Buber defined inclusiveness: "The complete realization of the submissive person, the desired person, the 'partner', not by fancy but by the actuality of the being."[139] In contrast to empathy, inclusiveness does not exclude one's own concreteness. Rather, it is the extension of one's concreteness, the fulfillment of the actual situation of life, the complete presence of the reality in which one participates.[140] Hence, "A relation between persons that is characterized in more or less degree by the element of inclusion may be termed a dialogical relation."[141]

The relation in education is one of pure dialogue.[142] Because the relation in education is dialogical, trust in the world because a human being exists becomes an important inward achievement in education.[143]

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[137] _Ibid_., p. 96.

[138] _Ibid_.

[139] _Ibid_., p. 97.

[140] _Ibid_.

[141] _Ibid_.

[142] _Ibid_., p. 98.

[143] _Ibid_.

Buber explained the phrase: "This human being exists."[144] The student achieves trust in the world because the teacher is really there, really facing the child, not merely there in spirit.

> In order to be and to remain truly present to the child he must have gathered the child's presence into his own store as one of the bearers of his communion with the world, one of the focuses of his responsibilities for the world, . . . if he has really gathered the child into his life then that subterranean dialogic, that steady potential presence of the one to the other is established and endures. Then there is reality between them, there is mutuality.[145]

Buber then became very confusing. He argued that inclusion constitutes the peculiar nature of the relation in education, but that it cannot be mutual.[146]

The relationship between the student and teacher, of course, would have to be that of mutuality. As Diamond has argued, mutuality is Buber's criterion for distinguishing between a delusory and true I-Thou relationship, the means to true knowledge, true whole being, true participation in being.[147] Yet--Buber has argued that educational inclusion is not one of full mutuality!

> However intense the mutuality of giving and taking with which he is bound to his pupil, inclusion cannot be mutual in this case. He experiences the pupil's being educated, but the pupil cannot experience the educating of the educator. The educator stands at both ends of the common situation, the pupil only at one end. In the

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[144] Ibid.

[145] Ibid.

[146] Ibid., pp. 98-99.

[147] Diamond, op. cit., p. 22.

> moment when the pupil is able to throw himself across the experience from over there, the educative relation would be burst asunder, or change into friendship.[148]

To conclude my argument, I feel that some implications for education flowing from the I-Thou relationship are unclear because Buber's application of the I-Thou relationship to knowing and the educational experience is unclear. Specifically, suppose that mutuality is a criterion for distinguishing between true and delusory I-Thou relationships, an encounter which leads men to "embrace" the world and to know its true meaning. Yet, the specific educational relationship between teacher and pupil is not one of full mutuality. Logically, then, the specific teacher-pupil relationship cannot lead to the finest or purest I-Thou relationship; hence, it cannot lead to the highest form of I-Thou knowing.

Conclusions

There are seven implications for education that can be deduced from Buber's views concerning the nature of knowledge and knowing.

a) Living with people, other persons, is primary.

b) Books are important, and subject matter is important, insofar as Buber recognized that man cannot live in the present alone.

c) Books and subject matter become an evil when they are considered to be a total encompassment of truth.

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[148] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., pp. 100-101.

d) The function of the teacher is to enable the student to discover the original I-Thou encounter which has become organized in the It structure of knowledge. This is so because essential knowledge is contained in an enduring concept, the It, which is based upon an original I-Thou encounter.[149]

e) The concept of "living truth" has positive implications. What is important is not only the idea, the concept, the belief, but what one does with it. Authentic men live the truth and stand firm in the truth, verifying it by their very being.

f) Buber's views about I-Thou knowledge have unclear implications for education. This is so because Buber views the educational meeting of teacher-pupil to be one without full mutuality.

g) Do implications for education flow from Diamond's interpretation of Buber's view concerning the inter-relationship of I-It knowledge, detached knowledge, and I-Thou knowledge, knowledge of the fully present?

If Diamond is correct in his interpretation, I-It increases the possibilities of having a true I-Thou encounter.[150] As Diamond expressed it: "While this technical knowledge makes it harder for the musician to 'let himself go' at a concert, his Thou encounters when they occur, will be just that much richer. Only one who has actually mastered a discipline, can witness to the deeper fulfillment of subsequent Thou encounters."[151]

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[149] Buber, "Replies to My Critics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., pp. 691-692.

[150] Diamond, op. cit., pp. 34-36.

I am inclined to conclude, however, that it is a weakness of Buber's thought that he did not sufficiently explicate the interrelationship of I-It knowledge and I-Thou knowledge. There is only a hint of how one might use Buber's terms and concepts, to show how subject matter, systematic knowledge, can increase the richness of possible I-Thou encounters.[152]

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[151] Ibid., p. 36.

[152] Buber discusses how having an I-Thou relationship at one time enables an individual, living in the structure of the world of It, to enrich the world of It. For example, see I And Thou, pp. 114-115. What Diamond seems to be pointing out is that the reverse was not fully developed in Buber's thoughts. In my personal opinion, that is sad. Buber clearly recognized that we cannot live in the world of the present alone; that we need the world of the past, wherein we organize our lives. Yet, he did not show us how I-It knowledge enriches I-Thou, as he thought he showed us how I-Thou knowledge enriches I-It knowledge, the world of It.

CHAPTER III

ETHICS

Basic Ethical Concepts

In his Eclipse of God, Buber has written:

> We mean by the ethical in this strict sense the yes and no which man gives to the conduct and actions possible to him, the radical distinction between them which affirms or denies them not according to their usefulness or harmfulness for individuals and society, but according to their intrinsic value and disvalue. We find the ethical in its purity only there where the human person confronts himself with his own potentiality and distinguishes and decides in this confrontation without asking anything other than what is right and what is wrong in this his own situation. The criterion by which this distinction and decision is made may be a traditional one or it may be perceived by or revealed to the individual himself. What is important is that the critical flame shoot forth ever again out of the depths, first illuminating, then burning and purifying. The truest source of this is a fundamental awareness inherent in all men, though in the most varied strengths and degrees of consciousness, and for the most part stifled by them. It is the individual's awareness of what he is "in truth," of what in his uniqueness and non-repeatable created existence he is intended to be. From this awareness, when it is fully present, the comparison between what one actually is and what one is intended to be can emerge.[1]

In another work he said:

> And if one still asks if one may be certain of finding what is right on this deep path, once again the answer is No; there is no certainty. There is only a chance, but there is no other. The risk does not insure the truth for us; but it, and it alone, leads us to where the breath of truth is to be felt.[2]

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[1] Buber, Eclipse of God, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

[2] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 139.

On the basis of the above passages, Fox has argued that every moral decision, in Buber's system, is a risk.[3] There are no final answers available to the human being. On the other hand, we must take the chance, "else we reduce ourselves to mechanical automata and destroy our humanity."[4]

Combining the above points, I briefly summarize Buber's basic ethical concepts. (a) There are no final answers available to us. (b) Yet man must choose or become "mechanical automata." (c) One must choose in the given situation what is right and what is wrong. This is "the ethical in its purity."[5] (d) The criterion for choosing, pointed out in Eclipse of God, may be a traditional one, or one "revealed to the individual himself."[6] (e) But what is of critical importance is that in each situation "the critical flame shoots up ever again out of the depths, . . ."[7] (f) The passage from Eclipse of God clearly points out that the source for this critical flame is a "fundamental awareness inherent in all men" of what one is in truth, "of what in his unique and non-repeatable created existence he is intended to be."[8]

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[3] Marvin Fox, "Some Problems in Buber's Moral Philosophy," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 151.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Buber, Eclipse of God, op. cit., p. 95.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., pp. 95-96.

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Good and Evil

> Good and evil . . . cannot be a pair of opposites like right and left and above and beneath. "Good" is the movement in the direction of home, "evil" is the aimless whirl of human potentialities without which nothing can be achieved and by which, if they take no direction but remain trapped in themselves, everything goes awry . . . [9]

Prior to this important statement Buber had defined man as: "The crystallized potentiality of existence."[10]

Also when Buber presented the anthropological reality of good and evil,[11] he described the beginning of human life as the experience of chaos as a condition perceived in the soul.[12] Through such a perception, man becomes aware of the category of possibility. In his view, the soul becomes startled and attempts to escape from its situation when "the chaos of possibilities of being, having forced an entry, become a chaos of possibilities of action."[13]

The soul can do two things: it can clutch at any object or it can work at self unification.[14] "To the extent to which the soul achieves unification it becomes aware of direction, becomes aware of itself as sent in quest of it. It comes into the service of good or into service for good."[15] On the other hand, seeking an undirected reality, the chosen object, is evil, insofar as it is seeking the directionless.[16]

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[9] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 78.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Buber, Good and Evil, op. cit., p. 64.

[12] Ibid., p. 125.

[13] Ibid., p. 126.

[14] Ibid., p. 127

Further developing these concepts, Buber argued:

> Evil is lack of direction and that which is done in and out of it as the grasping, seizing, devouring, compelling, seducing, exploiting, humiliating, torturing, and destroying of what offers itself. Good is direction and what is done in it; that which is done in it with the whole soul, so that in fact all the vigor and passion which evil might have done is included in it.[17]

The second stage of evil is not simply evil as indecision, or evil as directionless. Rather, because every man requires confirmation,[18] "At a pinch, one can do without confirmation from others if one's own reaches such a point that it no longer needs to be supplemented by the confirmation of others."[19] "At times one must choose himself just as he is, as he has himself resolved to intend himself."[20]

In the second stage, evil becomes radical because the individual affirms himself as he thinks he ought to be; he does not confirm himself, and is not confirmed by others as what his intention, what is inherent in him, would have him be.[21]

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[15] _Ibid_., p. 127.

[16] _Ibid_.

[17] _Ibid_., pp. 130-131.

[18] _Ibid_., p. 135.

[19] _Ibid_., p. 136.

[20] _Ibid_., p. 137.

[21] _Ibid_., p. 140.

On the other hand, in both stages, i.e., the stage of directionless, and the stage of radical evil, i.e., self affirmation, good is direction.[22] What does Buber mean by direction?

> Either it is understood as direction toward the person proposed for me, which I only apprehend in such self-awareness that divides and decides. . . . transforming undirected energies into it by conferring decisions upon them: . . . or else the single direction is understood as the direction toward God. This duality is only a duality of aspects, . . . One's uniqueness can be experienced as a designed or preformed one, trusted to one for execution, although everything that affects me participates in this execution.[23]

Concerning one who knows his direction, Friedman commented:

> The person who knows direction responds with the whole of his being to each new situation with no other preparation than his presence and his readiness to respond. One discovers the mystery waiting for one, not in one's self, but in the encounter with what one meets. The goal of creation that we are intended to fulfill is not an unavoidable destiny, but something to which we are called and to which we are free to respond or not to respond. Our awareness of this calling is not a sense of what we may become in terms of our position in society nor is it a sense of what type of person we should develop into. Direction is the primal awareness of our personal way to God that lies at the very center of our awareness of ourself as I.[24]

Man can make the evil, the directionless, or the self affirmation, good, by coming to realize what his direction is, by unifying his energies and possibilities to use in the actualization of his being-intention. This is succinctly summarized in Buber's comprehension of the Hasidic teachings: "The not holy does not exist, only the not yet hallowed."[25] Similarly, the evil is that which has not yet been directed in accord with the being-intention of one's self, which one comes to know by being with others and by deeply probing his inner being.

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[22] _Ibid_., p. 140.

[23] _Ibid_., pp. 141-142.

[24] Maurice Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," _Library of Living Philosophers_, _op. cit_., p. 176.

Responsibility

Responsibility entails responding: "Hearing the unreduced claim of each particular hour in all its crudeness and dis-harmony and answering it out of the depths of one's being."[26] "Genuine responsibility exists only where there is real responding."[27] To what does one respond? Responsibility implies responding to the other individual, qua other, qua person.[28] Hence, responsibility presupposes another who addresses me and to whom I am answerable.[29]

When discussing "The Prejudices of Youth,"[30] Buber pointed out that there is a form of individualism which regards only the individual as the goal of the whole.[31] He felt that such a view neglected the concept that true community among men cannot come into being until each individual accepts full responsibility for the other; "particularly, that a crisis in the community, such as that of today, can only be overcome if the individual charges himself with a share in the situation, and discharges it as a personal responsibility."[32] Thus, Buber disapproved of "contemporary man"[33] who evades this personal responsibility by escaping into membership in a "collective."[34] He contended that membership in a group should not constitute escape from personal responsibility. Hence, whereas men should join together in groups, group thinking, group decisions, should never take the place of personal responsibility.[35]

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[25] Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man, op. cit., p. 29.

[26] Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 175.

[27] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 16

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., p. 45.

[30] Martin Buber, Israel and The World, (New York: Schocken Books, 1963), pp. 41-53.

[31] Ibid., p. 47.

The Source of the Ethical Judgment

It is my view that Buber does not hold the position that one makes ethical judgments on the basis of prescribed rules and regulations. As support, I cite three references from the many writings of Martin Buber.

In Between Man and Man, Buber argued that he experiences what God desires of him at that hour, "not earlier than in this hour."[36]

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 68.

There is "no book of rules."[37] Since an answer is demanded at that time, "I give the word of my answer by accomplishing among the actions possible, that which seems to my devoted insight to be the right one."[38]

In Eclipse of God, Buber argued that it would be a "fundamental misunderstanding" of what he was saying if one interpreted it to mean that he was "upholding so-called moral heteronomy or external moral laws. . . ."[39]

Third, recalling that significant quote from Eclipse of God with which I began this chapter, one remembers that distinguishing and deciding what is right and what is wrong in a given situation can be done on the basis of tradition, or by perceiving what has been revealed to the individual himself. However, also recall Buber's statement that the truest source for this is that "fundamental awareness inherent in all men . . . of what he is 'in truth.'"[40] Assuming that one accepts Friedman's interpretation that this is conscience, "the voice which calls one to fulfill the personal intention of being for which he was created,"[41] then it is clear that deciding what is right and what is wrong in a given situation is not done through reference to any given set of rules and regulations.

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[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Buber, Eclipse of God, op. cit., p. 98.

[40] Ibid., p. 95.

[41] Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 175.

The source of the ethical judgment is not self-encounter.[42]

> I am constitutionally incapable of conceiving of myself as the ultimate source of moral approval or disapproval of myself, as surety for the absoluteness that I, to be sure, do not possess, but nevertheless imply with respect to this yes or no. The encounter with the original voice, the original source of yes or no, cannot be replaced by any self-encounter.[43]

Also Buber differed with Sartre who argued that "someone is needed to invent values," and that values therefore are "nothing else than this meaning which you choose."[44]

> One can believe in and accept a meaning or a value, one can set it as a guiding light over one's life if one has discovered it, not if one has invented it . . . Not if I have freely chosen it for myself from among the existing possibilities and perhaps have in addition decided with some fellow-creatures: This shall be valid from now on.[45]

Fox has argued that Buber's moral philosophy is based upon an absolute authority, God.[46] "Buber believes that moral values must be absolute and must be related to an absolute else they cannot be binding at all."[47] Fox interpreted that passage in Eclipse of God where Buber speaks of finding the ethical in its purity by deciding what is right and what is wrong in a given situation to imply that man seeks to discover what is intrinsically valuable, "then, Buber believes, he must appeal to the Absolute."[48] "In this commitment to absolute values we see one side of Buber's moral philosophy, namely the conviction that the Absolute (i.e., God) exists, that He is the source of values and of moral obligation, and that all men are accountable to Him."[49]

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[42] Buber, Eclipse of God., op. cit., p. 18.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid., p. 70.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Fox, op. cit., pp. 151-153.

[47] Ibid., p. 152.

Fox cited Buber's statement: "Only an absolute can give the quality of absoluteness to an obligation."[50] Since every genuine obligation is absolute, every moral decision presumes the absoluteness of the claim which is made on us.[51]

Thus, a primary conclusion was reached by arguing that since Buber has rejected one's self as the source of the absolute through either self-encounter or invention of values, "only in relationship to the absolute can man discover true values."[52]

Fox then contended that if this is the case, man must have some access to the authority, the Absolute, to God. Because revelation is the way man and God interact, and the way man comes to have a "presence of power," which includes confirmation of meaning, and a sending forth, Fox argued that Buber's moral views are inextricably linked with his views of revelation.[53]

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[48] _Ibid_.

[49] _Ibid_.

[50] Buber, _Eclipse of God_, _op. cit_., p. 18.

[51] Fox, _op. cit_., pp. 152-153.

[52] _Ibid_., p. 153.

[53] _Ibid_., pp. 153-154.

Another approach to the problem of the source of the ethical judgment in Buber's moral philosophy is found in Maurice Friedman's "The Bases of Buber's Ethics."[54] He contended that everyone agrees that Buber's views of religion (and revelation) are relevant to his moral philosophy.[55] But, what role does his philosophical anthropology play in his ethics?[56]

Thus, Friedman both proposed and answered the question of whether one can develop an autonomous ethics based upon Buber's philosophy of dialogue, his philosophical-anthroplogy.

> . . . Buber's ethics is directly based on and informed by his philosophical-anthropology--that these two are, in fact, inseparable since the problem of what man is includes the question of authentic existence, what it means to be really human, while ethics must be grounded in a descriptive as well as normative definition of what man "is" if its "ought" is to have any meaning or force. Certainly, it is in Buber's philosophical-anthropology that one can see the main categories of his ethics spelled out.[57]

Friedman recognized that the categories of philosophical-anthropology, "awareness and response, responsibility, uniqueness, decision, direction, personal wholeness,"[58] imply an ethics, and that the very categories of the philosophical-anthropology are related to Buber's philosophy of religion and revelation. Significantly,

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[54] Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., pp. 171-200.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid., p. 179.

[58] Ibid.

Friedman argued that the choice for Buber is not between religion and morality, but between a religion and morality wedded to the universal and a religion and morality wedded to the concrete.[59] This is especially true because philosophical-anthropology, by its very definition, deals with the concrete individual. If Buber's ethics are related to his views of religion and revelation, the crucial point is what kind of revelation--the historical revelation or the present, everyday, concrete revelation?[60]

These points can be linked together. Philosophy of dialogue implies the lived concrete. "Everyday revelation" does so also. Hence if philosophy of dialogue and ethics are identical, religion and ethics are identical.

Friedman made it clear that Martin Buber's ethics, in the final analysis, must be understood as Biblical.

> In the Crito and The Republic the good is intrinsic to a person's being but not to the relation between man and man themselves: . . . In the Psalms, in contrast, man's very existence is set in relationship with reality that confronts him, and this relationship transcends "ethics" and the usual understanding of the term.[61]

To support his view, Friedman quoted the following passage from Buber's Good and Evil:

> And yet the Psalmist has obviously another purpose than the philosopher, who tells us that virtue is its own reward. . . . For what he really means is completely untouched by what the philosopher could say to him about

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[59] *Ibid.*, p. 180.

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 199.

> the self-enjoyment of the moral man. What he means about the life of the man of whom he speaks cannot be grasped by means of moral values; and what he means about his happiness has its home in another sphere from that of a man's self-satisfaction. Both the conduct of the man's life and his happiness in their nature transcend the realm of ethics as well as that of self-consciousness. Both are to be understood only from a man's intercourse with God, which is the basic theme of the Book of Psalms.[62]

"Here the question of the source of moral obligation is identical with the question of authentic dialogical existence. In this identity all the bases of Buber's ethics join."[63]

Problems in Buber's Moral Philosophy

Both Fox's and Friedman's interpretations of Buber's moral philosophy point out the difficulties. At least eight questions are raised by Fox.[64] On the basis of his study and after raising his objections, Fox concluded that Buber's moral philosophy is "an attempt to defend moral anarchy while pleading for moral order."[65]

In the opinion of this writer, similar to what I concluded in the previous chapter, the strongest objection, or problem is: how does one distinguish between the true and the false I-Thou relationship? In ethics, this becomes particularly relevant because Buber has argued, in Fox's view, that revelation is the way to discover the Absolute, and the moral. But, if we do not know whether the I-Thou relationship itself is valid or delusory, how can we be sure if the moral and ethical obtained from such a relationship is moral or ethical, or any more moral or ethical than anyone else's? Hence, supposing that Hitler had some I-Thou relationship with the German people, how is one to say that the moral and ethical judgments which he made on the basis of his I-Thou relationship were any worse than the moral and ethical judgments made on the basis of a Mosaic I-Thou relationship with God or by Jesus with the God of his fathers? If one would decide that the Mosaic I-Thou relationship or Jesus' I-Thou relationship brought forth more morally and ethically binding laws or principles than that of Hitler with the Germans, one would have to appeal to another general principle! By utilizing such another general principle, e.g., the greatest good for the greatest number, one undermines Buber's system. That is, it is not the I-Thou relationship itself which gives the ethical, but whether or not what the I-Thou relationship reveals corresponds with another principle!

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[62] Buber, Good and Evil, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

[63] Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 200.

[64] Fox, op. cit., pp. 155-173.

[65] Ibid., p. 170.

In response to Fox, Buber stated that Fox's views manifest "strange misunderstandings."[66] One such misunderstanding relates to a misinterpretation, in Buber's view, which serves as a basis for Fox's objections to Buber's moral philosophy. Having argued that Buber bases ethical judgments upon an absolute, Fox argued that that absolute is God and, "no act can be right . . . unless it arises from a bond with God."[67]

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[66] Buber, "Replies to My Critics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 700.

[67] Fox, op. cit., p. 159, cited by Martin Buber, "Replies to Critics," p. 700.

Buber manifested little patience with this statement.

> Where do I teach that? If I taught that, I would, indeed, have to be of the opinion that a man who does not believe in God (or imagines that he does not believe in Him) could not act morally. But I am by no means of this opinion.

In similar vein, Buber answered Fox who ascribed to him the teaching that no action is "morally significant" if it is not "linked to God."

> Nothing lies further from me than to teach that; I always had a down right naive sympathy for the good deeds of the godless or those who act like they are godless, and I find it glorious when the pious man does the good with his whole soul "without thinking of God."[68]

More evidence, which may clarify the issue, comes from Buber's writings with reference to character education.

Education of Character

"Education worthy of the name is essentially education of character."[69] Having defined character as "the link between what this individual is and the sequence of his actions and attitudes,"[70] Buber contended that "in education one can and one must aim at character."[71]

Buber held the view that it is a fatal mistake to "give instruction in ethics."[72] If a teacher consciously attempts to influence, the pupils will realize what is occurring and resist. Therefore, education of character does not imply introducing lessons into a class concerning good character or what is right or wrong.[73] What is crucial is not a moral genius, "but you do need a man who is wholly alive and able to communicate himself directly to his fellow beings. His aliveness streams out to them and affects them most strongly and surely when he has no thought of affecting them."[74]

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[68] Buber, "Replies to My Critics," Library of Living Philosophers, loc. cit.

[69] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 104.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid., p. 105.

Character, in Greek, means impression.[75] What impresses in education? Everything, answered Buber. Nevertheless, of all the impressers, the educator is the only willful one. "He represents to the eyes of the growing person a certain selection of what is, a selection of what is right, of what should be. It is in this will and this consciousness that his vocation as an educator finds its fundamental expression."[76]

What does this mean in practical terms? Buber gave the example of a young man who approached a teacher with a problem. The young man had confided a secret in someone else, and that other individual had revealed that secret to a third person. The student sought advice. What should he do? Should the student call to account the one who had violated his confidence, or simply refuse to confide in him again in the future?[77] Significantly, Buber stated: "To dictate what is good and evil in general is not his business."[78] The function of a teacher is not to instruct in ethics, nor to authoritatively state that X is good or Y is bad. Rather it is:

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[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid., p. 106.

[76] Ibid.

> . . . to give an answer which will probably lead beyond the alternatives of the question by showing a third possibility which is the right one. . . . His business is to answer a concrete question, to answer what is right and wrong in a given question. This, as I have said, can only happen in an atmosphere of confidence. . . . It is not the educational intention but it is the meeting which is educationally fruitful. . . .[79]

Furthermore, Buber wrote: "The teacher must never forget that conflicts too, if only they are decidedly in a healthy atmosphere, have an educational value. A conflict with a pupil is the supreme test for the educator."[80]

If the teacher's posture towards his pupil involves confidence, gained through interhuman relationship, and the willful impressings of the teacher are geared to pointing out third alternatives, by bringing the student to a state of seeking not pat answers, but the real truth, "then everything that passes between them can, without any deliberate or politic intention, open a way to the education of character: lessons and games, conversation about quarrels in the class or about the problems of a war."[81]

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[77] _Ibid_., pp. 106-107.

[78] _Ibid_., p. 107.

[79] _Ibid_.

[80] _Ibid_.

[81] _Ibid_.

Many of the central concepts of his moral philosophy are apparent in these statements. The importance of the I-Thou relationship is clear. Furthermore, as argued in Eclipse of God,[82] ethics deals with what is right and wrong in a given situation, and what is of critical importance is that the flame of burning desire to know the truth and to discover it at that moment shoot forth. Thus, in that example which he gave, it was not the function of the teacher to instruct in ethics, to say X is right or Y is wrong. Rather it was his function to point out alternatives and to bring the student to a state where the critical flame shoots up within him.[83]

Buber's discussion of absolute values is related to Fox's interpretation of Buber's moral philosophy, specifically the view that Buber upholds the importance of absolute moral values, as well as the point that such values are discovered through I-Thou relationships, revelation. Buber commented that "to deny the presence of universal values, of norms, and absolute validity--that is the conspicuous tendency of our age."[84] As an example of absolute values being in danger in our modern times, Buber related an incident when a young Jew asked if there could be a suspension of the Ten Commandments, "i.e., can murder become a good deed if committed in the interest of one's own group?"[85] Buber felt that the question pointed out the fact that values and norms in our age are considered to be expressions only of a group which translated its own needs into the language of objective claims.[86]

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[82] Buber, Eclipse of God, op. cit., p. 95.

[83] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 107.

[84] Ibid., p. 108.

Are the Ten Commandments simply expressions of a group or do they manifest a "truth superior to man"?[87] Related to this is the question of how individuals, enslaved to the collective,[88] are to be rescued and to rediscover the validity of absolute norms and values.[89]

Buber answered. The first prerequisite is personal relation with the absolute brought about through becoming a person again, through rescuing one's real personal self from the "jaws of collectivism which seem to devour all selfhood."[90] Hence, "to keep the pain alive, to waken the desire--that is the first task of everyone who regrets the obscuring of eternity. It is also the first task of a genuine educator of our time."[91] That is, to bring an individual to a state where he recognizes the validity of absolute values, the educator must first strive to awaken within him the desire to become a real person.[92]

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[85] Ibid., p. 109.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid., p. 110.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid., pp. 110-111.

[91] Ibid., p. 111.

Buber then discussed the concept of habit.[93] He argued that the concept of character as "an organization of self control by means of the accumulation of maxims, or as a system of interpenetrating habits"[94] simply manifests the powerless "modern educational science" when it is faced by the sickness of man.[95]

> Not that the educator could dispense with employing useful maxims or furthering good habits. But in moments that come perhaps only seldom, a feeling of blessed achievement links him to the explorer, the inventor, the artist, a feeling of sharing in the revelation of what is hidden. In such moments he finds himself in a sphere very different from that of maxims and habits. Only on this, the highest plain of his activities, can he fix his real goal, the real concept of character which is his concern, even though he might not often reach it.[96]

Buber turned his attention to the "great character."[97] The real goal of the educator is the great character.[98]

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[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid., pp. 111-112.

[94] Ibid., p. 112.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Ibid., p. 113.

[98] Ibid.

> I call a great character one who by his actions and attitudes satisfies the claim of situations out of deep readiness to respond with his whole life, and in such a way that the sum of his actions and attitudes expresses at the same time the unity of his being in its willingness to accept responsibility. As his being is unity, the unity of accepted responsibility, his active life, too, coheres to unity. . . .
>
> All this does not mean that the great character is beyond the acceptance of norms. No responsible person remains a stranger to norms, but the command inherent in a genuine norm never becomes a maxim and the fulfillment of it never a habit. Any command that the great character takes to himself in the course of his development does not act in him as part of his consciousness or as material for building up his exercises, but remains latent in a basic layer of his substance until it reveals itself to him in a concrete way. . . . Evil approaches us as a whirlwind, the good as a direction. There is a direction, "yes," a command hidden even in a prohibition, which is revealed to us in moments like these. In moments like these the command addresses us really in the second person, and the Thou in it is no one else but one's own self. Maxims command only the third person, the each and the none.[99]

Insight into the structure of the great character can help the modern educator.[100] Beginning with the relationship of the pupils to their own selves, the educator "must elicit the values which he can make credible and desirable to his pupils."[101]

> He can help the feeling that something is lacking to grow into the clarity of consciousness and into the force of desire. He can awaken in young people the courage to shoulder life again. He can bring before his pupils the image of a great character who denies no answer to life and the world, but accepts responsibility for everything essential that he meets.[102]

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[99] _Ibid_., p. 114.

[100] _Ibid_., p. 115.

[101] _Ibid_.

[102] _Ibid_., pp. 115-116.

This will not lead to a "craving for aimless freedom."[103] The teacher can teach his students to recognize that discipline and order are the beginning of the way toward self-responsibility.[104] This can be done by bringing to the students the awareness that even the great character "is not born perfect."[105] The unity of the being of the great character had to first mature before expressing itself in the sequence of his actions and attitudes.[106]

Unity itself, "unity of the person, unity of the lived life,"[107] is emphasized. "A great and full relation between man and man can only exist between unified and responsible persons."[108] Thus, if man is to establish a just and righteous community, man must first become a unified entity.[109]

Secondly, "he who can see and hear out of unity will also behold and discern again what can be beheld and discerned eternally. The educator who helps to bring man back to his own unity will help to put him again face to face with God."[110] Unified man will again be able to hear the voice through revelation, and come to grasp the confirmed meaning of the eternal and absolute norms. To bring back absolute norms to man's life, the educator begins with the insight of the structure of the great character, i.e., the unified self. This can be started by the educator who awakens within the students the knowledge that something is lacking in their life and the desire to unify their being.

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[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid., p. 117.

Problems of Criterion in Education of Character

Buber's argument in "The Education of Character" seems to lend support to Fox's view that Buber defends moral order at the price of moral anarchy.[111] First, Buber clearly defended the necessity of absolute values. Secondly, Buber stated that the great character took on, in the course of his development, as part of his consciousness, a command. This command "remains latent in a basic layer of his substance until it reveals itself to him in a concrete way."[112] The question must be asked: how did the command become revealed to the great character in both instances? Third, the students of the collective are to obtain unity of self, an insight into the structure of the great character, who apparently has had some I-Thou relationship which enabled him to comprehend the eternal values, which ultimately result in the student himself facing God, "again viewing the eternal values."[113]

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[111] Fox, op. cit., p. 170.

[112] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 114.

[113] Ibid., pp. 116-117.

My position is that Buber did argue that there are absolute values, eternal norms, which are beheld by means of some I-Thou relationship. What was it that gave the great character the sense of command "in the course of his development"? How does one distinguish between the false or true I-Thou relationship of the great character and consequently between the true or false norm that he took on?

Furthermore, Buber had contended that the educator must select what is credible and desirable for the pupil in the realm of values.[114] On what basis? On the basis of some I-Thou relationship? If so, how is the teacher's I-Thou relationship to be determined as more or less real or false, more or less revelatory of meaning? If one accepts Friedman's view that the dialogical is the basis for Buber's ethics (disregarding for the moment Friedman's argument that it is also linked with the concept of everyday revelation, religion), one might still conclude that moral anarchy reigns while Buber pleads for moral order.[115] Granting that Buber acknowledges eternal norms, and granting that Friedman is correct in arguing that the dialogical leads to authentic existence, to valuing,[116] one still encounters the question of how one verifies an I-Thou relationship and its meaning more than any other I-Thou relationship. If being tested and being verified means being lived, then Hitler verified and lived his I-Thou relationship and proved its authenticity. If simply being applied to the "lived concrete" is the ultimate check of the validity of the I-Thou relationship, one does not have a sufficiently clear criterion for distinguishing between the ethical that flows from one I-Thou relationship or any other. If being lived in the concrete is the criterion, then _any_ I-Thou relationship could be verified in the lived concrete.

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[114] _Ibid_., p. 115.

[115] Fox, _loc. cit_.

[116] Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," _Library of Living Philosophers_, _op. cit_., p. 199.

The Line of Demarcation

According to Ernst Simon, one of Buber's most original "contributions to pedagogical theory"[117] is his doctrine of the line of demarcation.[118] The doctrine is an attempt to answer a difficult problem.

> The elements of decision are provided by the individual, who is co-responsible for his community, and the situation wherein one finds one self time and again and in which the educated character has to stand his ground. One may ask, however, how one can be prepared for and educated to these situations, which arise from the course of the world, and every case new and unforeseeable, and to which every reaction is freshly drawn from the deepest wellsprings of the personality.[119]

The concept of the line of demarcation implies that the line is to be drawn "anew daily between the absolute commandment and its temporarily relative fulfillability."[120] There is a "dilemma between the objective meaning of the commandment and the possibility of its realization on the personal level."[121]

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[117] Ernst Simon, "Martin Buber, The Educator," _Library of Living Philosophers_, _op. cit_., p. 571.

[118] _Ibid_.

[119] _Ibid_.

[120] _Ibid_., p. 572.

The concept of the line of demarcation also implies that each individual must determine what is right and wrong in the given situation, i.e., the application of the objective commandment.[122] But, "there is no recipe for the adequacy of this line, because it presents itself differently every time."[123]

Although Simon did not quote from Pointing The Way, Buber's statements there further reveal the problem of drawing the line of demarcation between the objective commandment and the fulfillable in a personal way.

> Concerning both the life of a person and the life of a human race what is possible in a certain hour and what is impossible cannot be adequately ascertained by any foreknowledge. . . . but one does not learn the measure and limit of what is attainable in a desirable direction otherwise than through going in this direction. The forces of the soul allow themselves to be measured only through one's using them. In the most important moments of our existence neither planning nor surprise rules alone: in the midst of the faithful execution of a plan we are surprised by secret openings and insertions. Room must be left for such surprises, however; planning as though they were impossible renders them impossible. . . .[124]

The concept of the line of demarcation encounters a major problem: "How a modicum of coordination between ethical and civic education can be reached in the unredeemed world."[125] This problem is elucidated by a number of questions, e.g., "Are we not teaching the children and young people just the contrary of what they will later be forced by the state and its rulers to practice, and indeed often be willingly compelled to do it? We direct them not to injure life, and property, and they will kill and burn; we teach them truth and they will lie. Are we absolutistic hypocrites, educating relativistic cynics? . . ."[126]

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[121] *Ibid*.

[122] *Ibid*.

[123] *Ibid*., p. 573.

[124] Buber, Pointing The Way, *op. cit*., p. 206.

According to Simon, Buber would answer in the following way: "A moral teaching is valid for every stage of life, for every part of the human race, in any of man's conditions. It should always be in our minds, animate our consciences . . ."[127] On the other hand, we should never prevent its maximum possible realization. We should always strive to fulfill the objective eternal norm in the given situation to its highest degree.[128]

Simon concluded that what Buber is really teaching is "education to compromise."[129] "The good is a compromise between absolute law and concrete reality."[130]

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[125] Simon, op. cit., p. 574.

[126] Ibid., pp. 574-575.

[127] Ibid., p. 575.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Ibid.

This formula raises a major problem. Since Buber has argued that good can only be done with the whole soul, one can legitimately ask how it is possible to "compromise" with the whole soul?[131] Since the ethical good belongs to the relation of totality, the I-Thou,[132] one can ask how one can do the good, which also requires intensity, complete mutuality, and directness, when one is also, if he applies the line of demarcation, supposed to compromise!

Buber rephrased the question: "Can one perform with the whole soul the compromise between absolute law and concrete reality that proceeds out of the wrestling" with the line of demarcation "as one does the good" with the whole soul?[133] He answered: "In theory I know no answer, and that does not surprise me, for this is one of the points in which the theory finds its limits. But in the realm of experience an answer is given to you."[134]

Buber pointed thus to a strong point in his ethical theory and a weak point. The strong point is Buber's existential motif. The emphasis upon the lived experience is central in his thinking, and it carries over into his ethics. One lives the truth; one discovers the line of demarcation by living in the given situation. Hence, one will also discover the modicum between ethical coordination and civic education through encounter, the lived presence. Buber will give no systematic answers to these problems!

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[131] Ibid.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Buber, "Replies to My Critics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 722.

[134] Ibid.

On the other hand, something had to occur in the lived encounter whereby one comes to know what is right in that given situation and what would be wrong. Since Buber could not accept the view that one invents the value at that moment, the question, again, is: how does one come to know what is right or wrong in that situation? And this question leads us back to the problem of the criterion for distinguishing between delusory and valid I-Thou relationships.

Conclusions

Some of Buber's thought-provoking ethical concepts with reference to education, heretofore pointed out, include his ideas that any subject is ethical, not by giving instructions in ethics, if it brings human beings to interhuman encounter or conflict, or leads to a further awareness of self, a wakening of interest, a realization of the lack that one possesses in his own being, a search to find the truth, a development of the relationship of trust, and confidence between student and student, and teacher and student. But these positive teachings seem over-shadowed by the problem of distinguishing between delusory and true I-Thou relationships!

CHAPTER IV

RELIGION

I will endeavor to present Buber's views concerning the nature of religion, the interrelationship of religion and ethics, his concepts concerning the function of tradition and religious symbols, and implications of his views for education. It is not my goal to present Buber's specific Jewish theology. I shall point out such specific views *if* they serve as illustrations or clarifications of the larger questions, e.g., what is religion?

Religion

Buber agreed that the theme of all his mature works is, in the final analysis, a single one, i.e., religion.[1] However, Buber urged the reader to understand that he would accept the adjective, *religious*, only if one also fully comprehended that type of religion of which he approved.[2] To clarify this, Buber cited the following instructive passage from his own writings:

> As often as religion has appeared once again in history, there was also in it a force that--not in a doubtful manner like the profane forces, but with the appearance of

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[1] Buber, "Replies to My Critics," *Library of Living Philosophers*, *op. cit*., pp. 741-742.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 742.

> the highest legitimacy--diverted man from God. That it thereby enjoyed a great success was caused for the most part by the fact that it is far more comfortable to have to do with religion than to have to do with God who sends one out of home and fatherland into restless wandering. In addition, religion has all kinds of aesthetic refreshments to offer its adherents, whereas God transforms for man even formation and vision in a sacrifice that is offered, to be sure, by a joyful but not by an enjoying heart. For this reason, at all times the awake spirits have been vigilant and have warned of the diverting force hidden in religion--which is, indeed, only the highest sublimation of the force that manifests itself in all life-spheres in this cruder autonomisation. . . . But either religion is a reality, rather _the_ reality, namely the _whole_ existence of the real man in the real world of God, an existence that unites all that is partial; or it is a phantom of the covetous human soul, and then it would be right promptly and completely to replace its rituals by art, its commands by ethics, its revelations by science.[3]

Buber elucidated: "The 'complete,' the legitimately religious existence of man, does not stand in a continuity but in the genuine acceptance and mastery of a dis-continuity."[4] This discontinuity is between essentiality and inessentiality.[5] That is, it is a discontinuity between the I-Thou relation and the I-It relation to all being.[6] Religious thought entails the acceptance of human existence in its factual discontinuity; one must recognize that one cannot live in the bare present, the I-Thou, all the time, and one cannot live in the

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Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., pp. 742-743.

Ibid.

I-It all the time.[7] The truly religious man gives "leadership" to the I-Thou relation.[8] This implies, then, that moments of I-Thou encounter serve to give one a glimpse of the meaning of one's being and can lead one to true, whole, complete living. Buttressing this, Buber stated: "The I-Thou relation . . . does not even grant the appearance of security, and precepts that one merely needs to remember are not to be drawn from it."[9]

We accept the discontinuity, but do not overcome it: "We take it upon us and master it through the realized primacy of the dialogical."[10] Buber linked this concept with the thought that the I-Thou relationship requires that one hold his self open for immediacy.[11] Such remaining open is the basic presupposition of the "religious" life in the legitimate sense of the term.[12]

Thus, one cannot live with complete answers to every question that one asks. One does not have a complete and whole system which gives one total salvation and completely relieves the burning existential impact of life. Rather, by remaining open for I-Thou encounters, the truly religious stance, one can have, perhaps, I-Thou encounters.

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[7] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 34.

[8] Buber, "Replies to My Critics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 743.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., p. 744.

[11] Ibid., p. 743.

[12] Ibid.

Such dialogical encounters enable one to grasp, or embrace, or to know the meaning of life, and one's own existence. But the discontinuity between the world of use and experience, and the world of I-Thou, is not totally overcome. Rather, one now accepts its brute factuality, lives with it, and becomes a true, whole, full, complete being.

There are many passages throughout Buber's writings, both those which specifically contain his interpretations of Judaism, and those which do not, which support his view as it appears in "Replies to My Critics."[13] However, "A Conversion"[14] both supported Buber's argument in "Replies to My Critics" and was poignant and clarifying.

Buber informed his reader that in his "earlier years"[15] religious experience was the "experience of an otherness which did not fit into the context of life. . . . The 'religious' lifted you out. . . ."[16]

> The illegitimacy of such a division of the temporal life, which is streaming to death in eternity and which only in fulfilling its temporality can be fulfilled in face of these, was brought home to me by an everyday event, an

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[13] See Buber's Pointing The Way, p. 238, Israel and the World, p. 49, I And Thou, pp. 59-60. In these passages Buber speaks of faith as engaging one's self, as faith and belief as an adventure that cannot be proved except by living, and contends that the term "believes" really means "meets."

[14] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

[15] Ibid., p. 13.

[16] Ibid.

> event of judgment, judging with that sentence from closed lips and an unmoved glance such as the ongoing course of things loves to pronounce.[17]

He had spent a morning in "religious enthusiasm."[18] He was visited by a troubled young man. Buber was friendly; however, he did not truly "experience the other side." He later discovered that his visitor came not for some idle chatter, but in order to make a crucial decision about his life. Because of being enveloped in some religious ecstacy, he was unable to fathom the other's real intention; Buber gave his reader the impression that he totally failed to help his visitor.[19]

Buber was awakened by this event and then made a basic decision concerning the meaning of religion for him:

> Since then I have given up the "religious" which is nothing but the exception, extraction, exaltation, ecstacy; or it has given me up. I possess nothing but the everyday out of which I am never taken. The mystery is no longer disclosed, it has escaped or it has made its dwelling here where everything happens as it happens. I know no fullness but each mortal hour's fullness of claim and responsibility. Though far from being equal to it, yet I know that in the claim I am claimed and I respond in responsibility, and know who speaks and demands a response.
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> I do not know much more. If that is religion then it is just everything, simply all that is lived in its possibility of dialogue. . . .[20]

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., pp. 13-14.

[20] Ibid., p. 14.

Similar thinking was manifested in Eclipse of God.

> The religious essence in every religion can be found in its highest certainty. That is the certainty that the meaning of existence is open and accessible in the actual lived concrete, not above the struggle with reality but in it.[21]

Let this suffice as evidence for Buber's view that religion is basically living in the here and now, meeting in the lived concrete, verifying the meaning of one's existence through meeting and living in the moment.

The Interrelation of Religion and Ethics

In the preceding chapter, the problem was raised whether Buber's ethics is based upon his religious views or not. Fox had argued that Buber based the ethical judgment upon an absolute, God. Friedman argued that one could develop an autonomous ethic based upon Buber's dialogical principle. However, Friedman also pointed out that the concepts of the dialogical relationship, i.e., mutuality, responsibility, wholeness, intensity, and directness also indicate Buber's religious views.

In this section I want to further develop my position that Buber held the view that, in its highest form, ethics is identical with living religiousness, and that the ethical is obtained through religion, the encounter with the Eternal Thou in the moment of revelation.

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[21] Buber, Eclipse of God., op. cit., p. 35. The underlining is mine.

I am inclined to accept the view that the encounter with the Eternal Thou, revelation, is religious. Buber stated that I-Thou finds its "highest intensity and transfiguration"[22] in religious reality in which the Eternal Thou, "unlimited Being, becomes an absolute person,"[23] one's partner. On the other hand, I-It finds its highest concentration in philosophical knowledge. In philosophical knowledge the immediate "lived togetherness" is extracted, and the Eternal Thou becomes contemplated Being, an object in the realm of It.[24]

Buber discussed the nature of revelation in I And Thou.[25] The central point is that revelation is that "presence as power"[26] in which the Eternal Thou is simply present.[27] "The Word of revelation is *I am that I am*. That which reveals is that which reveals. That which is *is* and nothing more. . . ."[28] However, in the moment of revelation, the "presence as power," an individual obtains confirmed meaning and is sent forth to live.[29]

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[22] *Ibid*., pp. 44-45.

[23] *Ibid*.

[24] *Ibid*.

[25] Buber, *I And Thou*, *op. cit*., pp. 109-112.

[26] *Ibid*., p. 110.

[27] *Ibid*., p. 112.

[28] *Ibid*.

[29] *Ibid*., pp. 109-112.

I feel that Buber made it clear that as a result of meeting God, at the moment of revelation, "summons and sending,"[30] man is not sent simply to meet God, but "in order that he may confirm that there is meaning in the world."[31]

Hence, it seems clear that Fox had a point in arguing that a function of revelation is to give man a sense of summons and sending, the ethical, so that man can live wholly and fully in the world. Now, it is my contention that since living in the world, in the lived concrete, is also Buber's definition of the religious, it seems clear that being religious and being ethical, at least in one sense, is identical.

However, I feel that it is important to point out, as Friedman has done, that morality and religion are wedded to the everyday revelation, the moment revelation, and not necessarily to a revelation of the historical.[32] The religious man, who has received a sense of the ethical in revelation, has received such not through an historical revelation, that which occurred to a Moses, to a Jesus, to a Mohammed, or to a Buddha, but through that which occurred in the everyday.

Also, recall Friedman's view that if one seeks to discover an autonomous ethic in Buber, one eventually arrives at a comprehension that the ethical and the religious are closely related. If the dialogical relationship, the I-Thou relationship, relates to the concept of authentic being, and authentic being is good, full, whole, directioned, purposeful being, one encounters a major problem. How can one make the I-Thou relationship, the goal, a means to accomplishing authentic existence? Friedman's answer is instructive. This can be done if one recognizes the importance of trust in an Eternal Thou, which means that there is the "potential Thou," which can be the "actualized Thou."[33] That is, the Eternal Thou assures us that every I-Thou relationship can be a full relationship.[34]

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[30] Ibid., p. 115.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., pp. 179-180, 181-183, 188-189.

> . . . our relation to the Eternal Thou is the very foundation of our relation to the temporal Thou if the latter is understood deeply enough. That we are able ever again to meet as Thou either the person who was Thou for us but is now It or some other whom we have never before related to as Thou already implies a continuing, even though not continuous, relation with the Thou that does not become It.[35]

Hence, it is trust, trust in the continuing Eternal Thou, which underlines Buber's ethics.[36]

According to Friedman, another way of comprehending the interrelation of religion and ethics is based on an understanding of Buber's statements: "Living religiousness wishes to bring forth living ethos."[37] "But always it is the religious which bestows, the ethical which receives."[38] Why is this so?

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[33] Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., pp. 191-193, 196.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid., p. 193.

[36] Ibid., p. 199.

[37] Buber, Eclipse of God, op. cit., p. 98.

[38] Ibid.

Buber partially answered when he said that it is only out of a personal relationship with the "absolute" that the absoluteness of the ethical coordinates can arise.[39] Friedman commented on the passage: ". . . it is the religious which bestows, the ethical which receives."[40] He believed that this is so because good is a type of relationship between persons. If this is the case, the good is not identical with universals, but must always be referred back to individuals. Hence, the good flows from actual concrete daily meeting with God, or with persons, such meetings always being glimpses of the Eternal Thou.[41]

Thus, it seems that there is ample evidence to support the view that the crux of Buber's thinking is that the Eternal Thou, religion, and ethics are intricately related.[42]

Symbols

For my purposes, Buber's main point concerning religious symbols was that they should always point back to the original meeting with the Meeter.[43] Buber argued that religious reality knows no image of the Meeter, "nothing comprehensible as object."[44] But symbols,

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

[42] Smith, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

[43] Buber, Eclipse of God., op. cit., pp. 45-46.

[44] Ibid.

"whether images or ideas,"[45] exist when the Thou becomes He, and that means It.[46] "And God, so we may surmise, does not despise all these similarly necessarily untrue images, but rather suffers that one look at Him through them. Yet they always quickly desire to be more than they are, more than signs and pointers toward Him."[47]

Similarly, Buber argued that all religious forms, institutions, and societies are real or fictitious, depending upon whether or not they serve to express, as shape and bearer of real religion, of real meeting, that real meeting.[48] If the religious forms simply take on an independent It existence, or conceal man's flight from real lived religiousness, responsibility for meeting, then they become evil.

Implications for Education

The following are the implications which seem to flow from Buber's views about religion, and the interrelationship of religion and ethics.

a) Since "all real living is meeting,"[49] a way to meet God, to truly live religiously, is to meet persons, other human beings, in the lived concrete moment.[50] Remembering Buber's statement that the meeting is educational, and not primarily the intention of the meeting,[51] support is given to this implication.

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[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., p. 113.

[49] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 11.

> Religious education, as Martin Buber sees it, should not be concerned with imparting objective information about God's being, accordingly, but with pointing to the age-old, ever-new dialogue with the God who hides and reveals Himself. The way in which this education takes place is itself a dialogue--between man and man.[52]

Man does not discover God, the Eternal Thou, but he responds to God. Thus, "man becomes aware of the address of God in everything that he meets if he remains open to that address and ready to respond with his whole being."[53]

As far as classroom procedure is concerned, it appears that what is needed is not a moral or religious genius, but a human being who is "wholly alive"[54] and able to communicate with his students.[55] Furthermore, since there are two other spheres of relation, with the realm of nature and the realm of spiritual beings, the teacher ought to enable students to meet and encounter the beings of those spheres. Thus, religious and ethical education, in a classroom, should be primarily experiential, i.e., meeting.

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[50] Buber, Eclipse of God, op. cit., p. 35.

[51] Buber, Between Man and Man,op. cit., p. 107.

[52] Friedman, "Martin Buber's 'Theology' and Religious Education," Religious Education, LIV, (January-February, 1959), p. 5.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 105.

[55] Ibid.

b) The relationship of trust is essential.[56] One of the basic achievements of the educational teacher-student relationship is confidence, and trust. Since trust in the Eternal Thou underlies Buber's ethics,[57] the development of a truthful and trusting relationship between man and man, specifically teacher and student is paramount: the teacher is the true representative of God.[58]

Buber's concept of "faith" is the Hebrew, emuna, or what he terms "holy insecurity."[59] Buber's concept of faith, elaborately developed in his Two Types of Faith,[60] is not salvation in the sense that it implies that by having faith one has all answers to all questions and is secure. Rather, one has some answers, and that one must live in the moment. Furthermore, because Buber clearly contended that he has no system, no dogma, but that he walks the narrow ridge, faith cannot be assuredness or security; rather it is the living in the here and now with trust that there is an Eternal Thou with whom one can relate and achieve I-Thou encounters, thus coming to know that there is meaning in life and meaning to one's existence.[61]

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[56] Ibid., p. 106.

[57] Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 199.

[58] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 94.

[59] Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism, op. cit., pp. 16-17, 26.

[60] Martin Buber, Two Types of Faith, translated by Norman P. Goldhawk, (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), pp. 7-8, 172-173.

[61] Ibid.

c) Thus, it can be argued religious education should not emphasize creed; it should emphasize dialogue.[62] "Does this mean that the objective content of religion does not matter?"[63] Yes, it does matter, but *only* if it "points back to man's relation with God rather than seeks to take its place."[64] That is, the literature of a given religion should not be studied in the classroom as the given final answers, as the creed or the dogma. Rather, it could be studied as symbolic or It-language, pointing back to the original I-Thou encounter which the writer thereof had with his Eternal Thou.

Symbols in the classroom ought not to be emphasized for their own sake. Just as God concepts are the language of It, the I-Thou encounter put into transmittible It-knowledge,[65] so the symbol should point back to the original I-Thou encounter. If philosophy, or any subject matter, is simply studied on its own behalf, it is evil.[66] Similarly, simply doing the customs and ceremonies of any religion is not religion; it may even be termed "evil." However, if it is understood that the customs and ceremonies point back to an original I-Thou relationship, then they have symbolic meaning as pointers.

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[62] Friedman, "Martin Buber's 'Theology' and Religious Education," *op. cit.*, p. 6.

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] *Ibid.*

[65] Buber, *Eclipse of God*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

[66] Diamond, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

d) In Between Man and Man[67] and Israel and the World[68] Buber described two types of educators; the funnel and the pump, or the sculptor and the gardener. One type of educator believes that objective subject matter is most important, and he therefore must pump it into his students.[69] On the other hand, the funnel type educator, or the gardener type, believes that if you simply till the ground in the correct way, the sprout will blossom forth.[70] Buber presented what has been termed the third alternative.[71] The third type of educator is one who allows freedom, as communion, to exist in the classroom but is also an effective selector of the given world.[72] With reference to religious education, the objective approach to religious education might be termed the "catechetical" and the subjective as the "inspirational."[73] Buber's third alternative would then imply that the orthodox fundamentalist approach as well as the "liberal religious educational approach"[74] should be rejected. In their place he would propose that type of religious educator who walks the fine line between the sermonizer and the discussion moderator. This third type of educator believes neither in good fellowship, permissiveness, nor does he believe in lecturing in order to transmit the religious and ethical values of a given religious approach.

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[67] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 89.

[68] Buber, Israel and the World, op. cit., p. 149.

[69] Buber, Between Man and Man, loc. cit.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Friedman, "Martin Buber's 'Theology' and Religious Education," op. cit., p. 12.

[72] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

[73] Friedman, "Martin Buber's 'Theology' and Religious Education," loc. cit.

[74] Ibid.

e) A primary function of the teacher is to bring the students to that stage where they "hear God's voice" once again.[75] This type of education implies, first, awakening the inner pain in the student's that something is lacking in their selves, enabling them to find their direction, the uniqueness of their selves, and enabling them to study the structure of the great character. Primarily, the educator should strive to enable them to know that to meet others, including the Eternal Thou, one must live _now_. _Hallowing the every day is paramount_.[76] This also implies that the profane is the not yet hallowed.[77] Each individual should strive to give direction to the forces of his life and the lives of others by hallowing them, by sanctifying them, by bringing forth living ethos, by living religiosity, i.e., by meeting other human beings. Also, this implies that to love God, one must first love man![78]

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[75] Buber, _Israel and the World_, _op. cit_., p. 163.

[76] Friedman, "Martin Buber's 'Theology and Religious Education," _op. cit_., p. 11. Also see Martin Buber, _Between Man and Man_, _op. cit._, pp. 114-117, and Buber's _I And Thou_, _op. cit_., pp. 79-80.

[77] Buber, _Hasidism and Modern Man_, _op. cit_., pp. 10-36.

[78] Buber, _Between Man and Man_, _op. cit_., pp. 54, 56-57.

f) Buber's thought relates to the question of teaching religion in a public school. First, there seems to be validity to the views of those religious educators who complain that "secular" teachers have quasi or anti-religious values which they impose on their students in the name of academic objectivity.[79] That is, if all real living is meeting, and if the meeting is educational, then no teacher can pretend to be objective towards religion. Buber might argue that one's failure either to say things or what one does actually say are educationally implicative insofar as the teacher meets his or her students qua person. Students can learn to adopt his or her attitude, not only by what he or she says, but by the way he or she remains silent. Hence, a follower of Buber could contend it is wrong to argue that there are individuals in public schools who teach no religion by remaining silent.

Similarly, just as much as a teacher who remains silent concerning questions of religion imposes a certain view by the way in which he or she conducts his or herself, so the teacher who pretends to objectively teach the content of any given religion manifests his or her attitude towards that specific religion. The way that the teacher interacts with the students, e.g., when teaching the history of the middle ages, the crusades, or the Inquisition, or when discussing current events which could deal with the Vatican Council, or differences between Arabs and Israeli-Jews, the teacher teaches religion by her demeanor, her attitude, her voice quality, the way she accentuates certain points or ignores others. A follower of Buber could argue that since the meeting is educational, and not simply the intention, the manner of meeting brings to the students a specific view of the events being discussed.

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[79] Friedman, "Martin Buber's 'Theology' and Religious Education," op. cit., p. 10.

This has implications for the question of teaching "about" religion. I feel that Buber would forcefully argue that no one can teach "about" religion. One lives religion, by meeting others. One cannot simply study about democracy, one learns democracy by living with others. One does not teach about God, but one meets God. One does not teach about respecting others, one respects others; one meets others.

Hence, since all meeting is educational, and since all meeting is a glimpse of the Eternal Thou, the teacher is "teaching" religion in everything that she does in the classroom! When she takes attendance, when she inquires about the welfare of her students, when she reprimands, when she praises, when she gives directions, when she enables the students to freely discuss, when she comes into conflict with her students concerning a certain point, she is teaching religion, for religion is hallowing every moment, living in the lived concrete.

g) Much of what I wrote in the above point is also applicable to the Religious School which is subject matter oriented. Such an approach would not be the one desired by Martin Buber. First, he did not approve of religion which was systematized or dogmatized. Secondly, although he did teach the text, he taught the text so that the students might come to a human encounter with one another, or with the teacher.[80] Therefore, the Religious School should be experientially orientated, e.g., praying ought to be done, not talked about. God can be met by meeting and living with others, and not by debating the It-structure-God-concepts. The Psalms should be studied not simply as works of poetic art, but to encounter the Thou of their authors.

There are many religious schools which emphasize the teaching of rituals and customs and ceremonies, for their own sake. I feel that Buber would contend that this is acceptable as long as it is also understood that customs and ceremonies are primarily symbols which point back to some I-Thou relationship or to the Eternal Thou. Simply to teach students to perform a religious custom and ceremony, whether it be lighting Sabbath Candles or saying the Rosary, is not sufficient!

h) One of the more important questions which Buber entertained was how to bring the ways of hearing the voice of God to a generation which does not hear the voice of God? Buber answered in the following way:

> This generation must be made receptive. . . . to the voice of the mystery which speaks in those utterances. And we should not do all this with the purpose of preparing them to repeat the teachings and perform rites, but so that they may acquire the power to make the original choice, that—

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[80] Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, op. cit., pp. 182-183.

> listening to the voice with that power--they may hear the message it has for their hour and their work; that they may learn to trust the voice, and through this trust, come to faith, to a faith of their own.[81]

This point, again, raises the problem of criterion. That generation is to learn to hear the voice. How? If I correctly understand Buber, some I-Thou relationship, moment of revelation, is required to hear the voice. Hence, supposing that X and Y claim to have heard the voice, that P and Q was the confirmed meaning, and that they were going to live it. How can anyone judge that X's "message" is any more or less valid than Y's, if there are no criterion for judging between true and delusory I-Thou encounters?

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[81] Buber, Israel and the World, op. cit., p. 163.

CHAPTER V

RELIGIOUS SOCIALISM

In this chapter I will endeavor to present the central themes of Buber's social concepts. After his ideas concerning "religious socialism" have been set forth, I will attempt to apply his thought to the teaching of social ideals and education's role in bringing about the "better world."

The Hasidic Community

Buber described the Hasidic Community as: "A society that lives by its faith."[1] Building upon this description, Buber contended: "The Hasidic community may be regarded as the social representation of the principle of spontaneity, . . ."[2] The spiritual structure of the community was based upon "handing on the kernel of the teaching of teacher to disciple."[3] According to Buber, the teaching was passed on in this manner because the truth could be taught most effectively in the atmosphere of the master-disciple relationship, in the spontaneous workings of the master's being and the spontaneous relation of the master-disciple.[4] Buber also felt that the teaching was further passed on to the members of the community in words of counsel and instruction; and it was further developed in the customs and "brotherly life of the community."[5]

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[1] Buber, *The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism*, *op. cit*., p. 27.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 144.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 148.

Buber thought that the Hasidic community was a "community of love."[6] All classes, rich and poor, were united as equal members, before God and the master, the righteous teacher, in the community where everyone sought to hallow the every day, and to help one another find access to reality.[7] "There is no separation within the human world between the high and the low; to each the highest is open, each life has its access to reality, each nature its eternal right, from each thing a way leads to God, and each way that leads to God is the way."[8]

It should be remembered that there is no doubt that Buber's understanding of the Hasidic movement is "highly selective."[9] Nevertheless, an acquaintance with Buber's interpretation of Hasidism, and specifically the Hasidic community in this chapter, is important. Hasidism influenced Buber, and Buber felt that it had a message for us.

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid., pp. 148-149.

[8] Ibid., p. 149.

[9] Diamond, op. cit., p. 112.

> I consider the truth of Hasidism vitally important for Jews, Christians, and other men, and at this particular hour more important than ever before. For now is the hour when we are in danger of forgetting for what purpose we are on earth, and I know of no other teaching that reminds us of this so forcibly.[10]

The Essential We

With reference to Buber's social views, it is important to note that Buber forcefully disagreed with two assertions made by Kierkegaard. "Everyone should be chary about having to do with 'the others,' and should essentially speak only with God and with himself."[11] The other assertion was: "The crowd is untruth."[12] Buber made this instructive statement about Kierkegaard: "Kierkegaard's thought circles around the fact that he essentially renounced an essential relation to a definite person."[13]

Buber would agree with Kierkegaard, especially if the crowd and its values rob the individual of his sense of direction.[14] However, he generally disagreed with the concept that the existential man should not be bound to other human beings, but should seek solely to relate to God.[15] Buber argued that if the crowd's decision swarms round him, the single one does not have to put up with it.[16] Whereas otherness "enschrouds him,"[17] it is, nevertheless, otherness to which he is betrothed.[18] "But he takes it up into his life only in the form of the other, time and again the other, the other who meets him, who is sought, lifted out of the crowd, 'the companion'."[19] Thus, he concluded that even if the single one has to speak to the crowd, he should always seek the person, "for a people can find and find again its truth only through persons, through persons standing their test."[20]

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[10] Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism, op. cit., p. 22.

[11] Buber, Between Man and Man, p. 50.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., p. 64.

[15] Ibid.

Since he considered the essential Thou to be the other to whom I relate, and the other through which I become I, Buber asked if there is something "corresponding to the essential Thou in the relation to the multitude of men . . ."[21] He answered: "What corresponds to the essential Thou on the level of self-being, in relation to a host of men, I call the essential We."[22]

What is this We? "By We I mean a community of several independent persons, who have reached a self and self-responsibility, the community resting on the basis of this self and self-responsibility, and being made possible by them."[23] The special character of the *We* is manifested in the essential relation which exists between its members.[24] This essential relation is ". . . the holding sway within the *We* of an ontic directness which is the decisive presupposition of the *I-Thou* relation. The *We* includes the *Thou* potentially. Only men who are capable of truly saying Thou to one another can truly say we with one another."[25]

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., pp. 64-65.

[21] Ibid., p. 175.

[22] Ibid.

Buber contended that there is no group-formation[26] which he could give as an example of the essential We. Nevertheless, he felt that in many group-formations, the "variety which is favorable to the arising of the *We* can be seen clearly enough."[27] Buber gave two examples: a revolutionary group and a religious group. In both of these examples, the common factor is that the members could prevent the *We* from arising if an individual is accepted, "who is greedy of power and uses others as means to his own end, or who craves for importance and makes a show of himself."[28] On the other hand, the *We* of the revolutionary group is found among those "whose members make it their labor among the people to waken and teach quietly and slowly; in religious groups we find it among those who strive for an unemphatic and sacrificial realization of faith in life."[29]

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[23] *Ibid*.

[24] *Ibid*.

[25] *Ibid*., pp. 175-176.

[26] *Ibid*.

[27] *Ibid*.

[28] *Ibid*.

Buber held the view that the essential _We_ has not been recognized before because "most group-formations have been studied from the viewpoint of their energies and effects and not their inner structure."[30] Buber's point, apparently, is that to understand the concept of the essential _We_, one must study the group from the view of what makes it the group, and not only its effects, powers, or forces.

Further examples of the essential _We_, specifically in transient forms, were given.[31] For example, Buber pointed out the "closer union which is formed for a few days among the genuine disciples and fellow workers of a movement when an important leader dies."[32] At such a moment, Buber argued, all difficulties and obstacles seem to be set aside, and a strange "fruitfulness,"[33] or "incandescence,"[34] of the life of the members one with another is established.[35]

Friedman attempted to clarify the difficult notion of the essential _We_. He felt that the concept of the essential _We_ serves as a corrective to those who have interpreted Buber's I-Thou relationship as limited to the relation between one person and another, and have, therefore, argued that Buber's thought does not deal with the larger realities of community life and living.[36]

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[29] _Ibid_.

[30] _Ibid_.

[31] _Ibid_.

[32] _Ibid_.

[33] _Ibid_.

[34] _Ibid_.

[35] _Ibid_.

> He distinguishes this "essential We" from the "primitive We," to which the essential We is related in the same way as the "essential *Thou*" to the "primitive *Thou*." As the "primitive Thou" precedes the consciousness of individual separateness, whereas the "essential Thou" follows and grows out of this consciousness, so the "primitive We" precedes true individuality and independence, whereas the "essential We" only comes about when independent people have come together in essential relation and directness.[37]

A comment made in "On Education" may be relevant.[38] In that essay Buber had argued that each man has the instinct for origination; but, "What teaches us the saying of *Thou* is not the originative instinct but the instinct for communion."[39] If the instinct for communion teaches us to say Thou to a single other, then it is possible to argue that that instinct for communion enables us to say We to many others, with whom we have I-Thou relationship, or to say Thou to one of many in a group who we address as We.

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[36] Friedman, *The Knowledge of Man*, *op. cit*., p. 34.

[37] *Ibid*., p. 39.

[38] Buber, *Between Man and Man*, *op. cit*., pp. 87-88.

[39] *Ibid*.

Religious Socialism

In his "Three Theses of a Religious Socialism,"[40] Buber appealed to the teaching of Ragaz: "Any socialism whose limits are narrower than God and man is too narrow for us."[41] Then Buber stated the three theses.

First, religious socialism does not mean that religion and socialism agree that each other are a separate sphere of influence. Rather it means: ". . . Religion and socialism are essentially directed to each other, that each of them needs the covenant with the other for the fulfillment of its essence."[42] Religion, "the human person's binding of himself to God,"[43] can reach its full realization only in the will of the community. On the other hand socialism, "mankind's becoming a fellowship, man's becoming a fellow to man,"[44] can only develop out of some common "relationship to the divine center."[45]

Second, religious forms, institutions, and societies are real only if they serve "as expression, as shape and bearer of real religio--a real self-binding of the human person to God-- . . ."[46]

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[40] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., pp. 112-114.

[41] Ibid., p. 112.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

On the other hand, all "socialist" programs are real only if they "serve as strength, direction, and real *socialitis*-- mankind's really becoming a fellowship . . ."[47]

Third, "the point where religion and socialism can meet each other in the truth is the concrete personal life."[48] Religion is not mere adherence to dogma or prescribed ritual: it means "standing and withstanding in the abyss of the real reciprocal relation with the mystery of God . . ."[49] Similarly, socialism is neither doctrine nor specific tactics, but "standing and withstanding in the abyss of the real reciprocal relation with the mystery of man."[50] Therefore, Buber felt that it is presumption both to proclaim belief in something without living it, and to seek to accomplish something, without truly living what one seeks to achieve.[51]

Thus Buber concluded: "Religious socialism means that man in the concreteness of his personal life takes seriously the fundamentals of this life; the fact that God is, that the world is, and that he, this human person, stands before God and in the world."[52]

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[47] *Ibid*.

[48] *Ibid*.

[49] *Ibid*.

[50] *Ibid*.

[51] *Ibid*.

[52] *Ibid*., p. 114.

The Living Center

With these three theses of religious socialism in mind, Buber's comments concerning the living center are germane. In I And Thou Buber stated: "The true community does not arise through people's having feelings for one another (though indeed not without it) but through, first their taking their stand in living mutual relation with a living Centre, and second, their being in living mutual relation with one another. . . ."[53] Similarly, Buber had argued that institutions yield no public life.[54] Then, he stated that "the world of Thou is not set in the context of 'space or time' but its context is in the center, 'where the extended lines of relation meet--in the Eternal Thou.'"[55]

Because of the fact that "in the great privilege of pure relation the privileges of the world of It are abolished,"[56] the formative power belongs to the world of Thou, and "turning is the recognition of the Centre."[57] "In this act of the being the buried relational power of man rises again, the wave that carries all the spheres of relation swells in living streams to give new life to our world."[58]

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[53] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 45.

[54] Ibid., p. 44.

[55] Ibid., p. 100.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

Furthermore, Buber argued:

> Authentic assurance of constancy in space consists in the fact that man's relations with the true Thou, the radii lines that proceed from all the points of the eye to the centre, form a circle. It is not the periphery, the community that comes first, but the radii, the common quality of relation with the Centre. This alone guarantees the authentic existence of the community.[59]

The above paragraphs should point out how the concept of religious socialism may be one of many central streams of thought flowing through I And Thou. I And Thou emphasized the importance of interhuman relationships, of community. It particularly emphasized the idea that true community can exist, can have authentic existence, only if all of the lines of personal relationship point to the Centre, the Eternal Thou, God.

Collectivism and Extreme Individualism

Buber did not favor the collectivist movement nor those who espoused the concept of extreme individualism. With reference to collectives, Buber stated: "It is obvious that for the man living in community the ground of personal and essential decision is continually threatened by the fact of so-called collective decisions."[60] Speaking of community, Buber recognized that it consists of more or less separate groups, which give to a man "various interpretations of destiny and of his task, which are utterly different, yet all alike claim absolute authenticity."[61] This claim to absolute authenticity disturbed Buber, for "each knows what benefits the community, each claims your unreserved complicity for the good of the community."[62]

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[59] *Ibid*.

[60] Buber, *Between Man and Man*, *op. cit*., pp. 66-67.

With reference to political decisions and joining a political group, Buber's thought is similar. He felt that once one joined a specific political group, the group has relieved him of his political responsibility.[63]

I feel that Buber rejected the collectivist movement because it opposes some of his concepts of religious socialism, but also because it is in diametric opposition to some of his ethical views. Specifically, it opposes the view that in ethics one must decide in a given decision what is right and wrong. Collectivism decides for you; hence, you are not given the opportunity yourself to decide in the given decision what is right and wrong, on the basis of your relationship to the Eternal Thou.[64]

Succinctly stated, Buber's opposition to extreme individualism may be summarized in this statement: "Society is naturally composed not of disparate individuals, but of associative units and the associations between them."[65] In Buber's view, capitalism, "and the state peculiar to it" lead to a "modern individualizing process" which "finished up as a process of atomization."[66]

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[61] Ibid., p. 67. The underlining is mine.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] See my chapter on Ethics. The reader who is interested in Buber's rejection of Marx and Lenin is referred to Buber's Paths in Utopia.

The Social and The Interhuman

"It is usual to ascribe what takes place between men to the social realm, thereby blurring a basically important line of division between two essentially different areas of human life. . . ."[67] Having made this statement, Buber clarified the difference between the social and the interhuman in these words:

> We may speak of social phenomena wherever the life of a number of men, lived with one another, bound up together, brings in its train shared experiences and reactions. But to be thus bound up together means only that each individual existence is enclosed and contained in a group existence. It does not mean that between one member and another of the group there exists any kind of personal relation. They do feel that they belong together in a way that is, so to speak, fundamentally different from every possible belonging together with someone outside the group. And there do arise, especially in the life of smaller groups, contacts which frequently favour the birth of individual relations, but, on the other hand, frequently make it more difficult. In no case, however, does membership in a group necessarily involve an existential relation between member and another. . . .[68]

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[65] Martin Buber, Paths in Utopia (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), p. 14.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Buber, The Knowledge of Man, op. cit., p. 72.

[68] Ibid., pp. 72-73.

For the interhuman to occur, Buber later argued, "The only thing that matters is that for each of the two men the other happens as the particular other, that each becomes aware of the other and is thus related to him in such a way that he does not regard and use him as his object, but as his partner and a living event, even if it is no more than a boxing match. . . ."[69] Buber also included in the realm of the interhuman "such simple happenings . . . as, for instance, when two strangers exchange glances in a crowded streetcar. . . ."[70] Buber further clarified the concept of the interhuman with these words: ". . . I mean solely actual happenings between men, whether wholly mutual or tending to grow into mutual relations. For the participation of both partners is in principle indispensable. The sphere of the interhuman is one in which a person is confronted by the other. We call its unfolding the dialogical."[71] Buber has raised this point and clarified it in expectation that some sociologist might object to a separation of the social and the interhuman "on the ground that society is actually built upon human relations, and the theory of these relations is therefore to be regarded as the very foundation of sociology."[72] Buber's point appears to be that the interhuman entails actual encounters between men.

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[69] Ibid., p. 74.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., p. 75.

[72] Ibid.

The following passage may help manifest the connection between Buber's social views and his concepts of the dialogical.

> The chief presupposition for the rise of genuine dialogue is that each should regard his partner as the very one he is. I become aware of him, aware that he is different, essentially peculiar to him, and I accept whom I thus see, so that in full earnestness I can direct what I say to him as the person he is. Perhaps from time to time I must offer strict opposition to his view about the subject of conversation. But I accept this person, the personal bearer of a conviction, in his definite being out of which his conviction has grown--even though I must try to show, bit by bit, the wrongness of this very conviction. I affirm the person I struggle with him as his partner, I confirm him as creature and as creation. I confirm him who is opposed to me as him who is over against me. It is true that it now depends on the other whether genuine dialogue, mutuality in speech arises between us. But if I thus give to the other who confronts me his legitimate standing as a man with whom I am ready to enter into dialogue, then I may trust him and suppose him to be also ready to deal with me as his partner. . . .[73]

This has educational implications.

> There are two basic ways of affecting men in their views and their attitude to life. In the first a man tries to impose himself, his opinion and his attitude, on the other in such a way that the latter feels the psychical result of the action to be his own insight, which has only been freed by the influence. In the second basic way of affecting others, a man wishes to find and to further in the soul of the other the disposition toward what he has recognized in himself as the right. Because it is the right, it must also be alive in the microcosm of the other, as one possibility. The other need only be opened out in this potentiality of his; moreover, this opening takes place not essentially by teaching, but by meeting, by existential communication between someone that is in actual being and someone that is in a process of becoming. The first way has been most powerfully developed in the realm of propaganda, the second in that of education. . . .[74]

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[73] _Ibid._, pp. 79-80.

[74] _Ibid._, p. 82.

Important for implications of Buber's thought for education are the following words concerning the educator, the interhuman, and the dialogical:

> The educator whom I have in mind lives in a world of individuals, a certain number of whom are always at any one time committed to his care. He sees each of these individuals as in a position to become a unique, single person, and thus the bearer of a special task of existence which can be fulfilled through him and through him alone. He sees every personal life as engaged in such a process of actualization, and he knows from his own experience that the forces making for actualization are all the time involved in a microcosmic struggle with counter-forces. He has come to see himself as a helper of the actualizing forces. He knows these forces; they have shaped and they still shape him. Now he puts this person shaped by them at their disposal for a new struggle and a new work. He cannot wish to impose himself, for he believes in the effect of the actualizing forces, that is, he believes that in every man what is right is established in a single and uniquely personal way. No other way may be imposed on a man, but another way, that of the educator, may and must unfold what is right, as in this case it struggles for achievement, and help it to develop. . . .[75]

Society and State: Social and Political Principles

Martin Buber furthermore differentiated between society and state, and between the social principle and the political principle.

> The society of a nation is composed not of individuals but of societies, and not . . . of families alone but of societies, groups, circles, unions, co-operative bodies, and communities varying very widely in type, form, scope, and dynamics. Society (with a capital S) is not only their collectivity and setting, but also their substance and essence; they are contained within it, but it is also within them all and none of them, in their inner most being can withdraw from it. . . .[76]

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[75] Ibid., p. 83.

[76] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., p. 173.

Buber recognized that society cannot quell the conflicts between the different groups. He felt that it is powerless to unite the clashing groups; "it can develop what they have in common, but it cannot force it upon them."[77] It is the function of the state to do that. The means which the state implies for this purpose are political.[78]

According to Buber, government utilizes the powers that it has to achieve the functions of the state.[79] Specifically, it applies the political principle. "Formulated in a sentence, it means roughly that public regimes are the legitimate determinants of human existence."[80]

Buber did not approve of "political surplus,"[81] nor the fact that special powers are often afforded to the government,[82] nor the fact that "the political principle is always stronger in relation to the social principle than the given conditions require. The result is a continuous diminution in social spontaneity."[83]

Buber discussed the question in the following way:

> Yet the social vitality of a nation, and its cultural unity and independence as well, depend very largely upon the degree of social spontaneity to be found there. The question has therefore been repeatedly raised as to how social spontaneity can be strengthened by freeing it as much as

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[77] Ibid.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid., p. 175.

[80] Ibid., p. 213.

[81] Ibid., p. 174.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., pp. 174-175.

> possible from the pressure of the political principle. It has been suggested that decentralization of political power, in particular, would be most desirable. As a matter of fact, the larger the measure of autonomy granted to the local and regional and also to the functional societies, the more room is left for the free unfolding of the social energies. Obviously, the question cannot be formulated as a choice between "Centralization" and "Decentralization." We must ask rather: "What are the spheres in which a larger measure of decentralization of the capacity to make dispositions would be admissable?" The demarcation would naturally have to be revised and improved continually to conform to the changing conditions. . . .[84]

With special reference to education, Buber spoke of the possibility of society revolting against the "political surplus" and the accumulation of power.

> . . . there is a way for Society--meaning at the moment the men who appreciate the incomparable value of the social principle--to prepare the ground for improving the relations between itself and the political principle. The way is Education, the education of a generation with a truly social outlook and a truly social will. Education is the great implement which is more or less under the control of Society; Society does not, however, know how to utilize it. Social education is the exact reverse of political propaganda. Such propaganda, whether spread by a government or by a party, seeks to "suggest" a ready-made will to the members of the society, i.e., to implant in their minds the notion that such a will derives from their own, their inner most being. Social education, on the other hand, seeks to arouse and to develop in the minds of its pupils the spontaneity of fellowship which is innate with the development of personal existence and personal thought. This can be accomplished only by the complete overthrow of the political trend which nowadays dominates education throughout the world, True education for citizenship in a State is education for the effectuation of Society. . . .[85]

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[84] _Ibid._, p. 175.

[85] _Ibid._, pp. 175-176.

Implications for Education

a) Buber recognized that genuine education of character is genuine education for community.[86] That is, development of young people, who understand the structure of the great character, unify their selves, and obtain direction is very important.[87] In addition, something else, that is like the binding glue that makes all of these factors relevant, should occur. Not only does the individual become a person, a true self, one who knows his direction, one who can act with existential risk by making decisions in the given situation, but he lives with others in a wholesome, constructive, and positive way.[88] Thus, Buber concluded: "A great and full relation between man and man can only exist between unified and responsible persons."[89]

Thus, the ethical-social-religious goal of education is the creation of an atmosphere wherein there occur student-teacher interrelationships enabling the student to discover the Thou therein, and eventually leading to genuine persons living in community. Therefore, "genuine education of character is genuine education for community."[90]

Such living in community with others may also be considered religious. It has been pointed out that the overcoming of social loneliness in Martin Buber's thought also implies the overcoming of cosmic loneliness.[91] I am inclined to believe that this, in one sense, is simply another way of calling attention to Buber's religious socialism. Men must live together, must learn to relate to one another as unified and responsible beings; yet such relationships, are, by their very nature, religious.

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[86] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 116.

[87] Ibid., pp. 115-117.

[88] Ibid., pp. 114-116.

[89] Ibid., p. 116.

[90] Ibid.

Buber recognized that there are many educative forces, i.e., the home, the family, social peer groups, simple everyday experiences, etc., but he considered the teacher to be a willful impressor.[92] Since the teacher is a selector of the effective forces and values of the world,[93] the teacher has an extremely important role in the development of religious socialism. The teacher is that individual in the classroom encounter who, with his very self, with the values that he has chosen, willfully impresses his students with such values and forces. This does not mean that the teacher is authoritarian. Buber contended that the teacher should guide, direct, and allow an atmosphere of freedom, possibility of communion, to exist in the classroom.[94]

This requires elucidation. The teacher is a willful impressor; but, if the students are aware of the fact that the teacher is attempting to willfully impress something upon them, they will resist.[95]

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[91] Rotenstreich, op. cit., p. 122.

[92] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 106.

[93] Ibid., p. 101.

[94] Ibid., pp. 88-89, 105.

[95] Ibid., p. 105.

Hence, the teacher must be wholly alive in the classroom, able to communicate himself directly to the students, and his aliveness should stream out to his students and affect them.[96] Buber felt that the effect will be strongest when the teacher has no thought of affecting the students.[97]

That is, the teacher knows where he wants to go. He has selected the forces and values, and has confirmed them in his self.[98] But, he cannot let it be known that he is endeavoring to guide them in a certain direction.[99] Nevertheless, since genuine education is education for character, and since the teacher does know what values he would like the students to discover or to take into themselves, the teacher walks the "narrow ridge." He must guide, and yet make it possible that the students do not realize that he is guiding. The teacher is most effective when she, or he, unconsciously lives and meets.

Because all real living is meeting, and because we come to know ourselves, discover our values, gain trust and confidence, through relationships with others, the classroom experiences selected by the teacher for the development of religious socialism, entail encounters with living others. I feel that this is a primary implication of Buber's social views.

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[96] *Ibid.*

[97] *Ibid.*

[98] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

[99] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

b) How can we bring about living togetherness of various groups, with various differing "world-views"?[100]

Buber clearly recognized that one must teach with a world-view. "No one can show others a reality except as it presents itself to him, necessarily, therefore as an aspect! It is then possible to teach without any world-view? . . . No, it is not possible, and no, it would not be desirable."[101] Buber then argued: "But for him who is teaching as for him who is learning, the question is whether his world-view furthers his living relationship to the world that is 'viewed' or obstructs it."[102]

Buber further developed these thoughts when he stated that the education which he is discussing sets groups with different world-views before the "face of the whole."[103] Since Buber spoke of the "face of the whole," not as some detachable object, but as "the life that they bear in common,"[104] his thoughts may imply that the various groups cannot stand detached, at a distance, and contemplate one another, or the face of the whole. Rather, "they must have to do with one another in this experienced communality. Only in lived togetherness, indeed, do they really come to sense the power of the whole."[105]

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[100] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., pp. 100-101.

[101] *Ibid*., p. 100.

[102] *Ibid*.

[103] *Ibid*., p. 101.

[104] *Ibid*.

[105] *Ibid*.

Buber also contended that this pedagogy does not simply set groups with different world views in direct relation one with another. "It also gives to each individual group what it needs for its own world-view and what it cannot give itself."[106]

According to Buber the problem of any world-view reaches its most acute stage when it confronts concreteness, in the lives of the persons who belong to that world-view or propose it.[107] He believed that two questions arise when one is faced with the problem of living in accord with his world-view: "Upon what does your world-view stand? And: What are you undertaking with your world-view?"[108]

He interpreted the first question to mean: "On what manner and what density of personal existence, of living awareness of things and of one's own person" does one's world-view stand?[109] The second was considered to entail more than the question of whether one fights for "and carries into effect" one's world-view;[110] it emphasizes the question of whether one lives and authenticates it.[111] "The truth of a world-view is not proved in the clouds but in lived life."[112]

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[106] Ibid., p. 102.

[107] Ibid., p. 103.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

Thus, after these statements, Buber concluded:

> The work of education has a two-fold influence upon the adherents of the world-views; a founding one and a postulating one. First, it helps each to take its root in the soil of its world through enabling him to experience this world widely and densely. It provides him access to it, exposes him to the action of its working forces. And, secondly, it educates in each his "world-view-conscience" that examines ever anew his authentication of his world-view and opposes to the absence of any obligation to put his world-view into effect, the obligation of the thousand small realizations of it.[113]

I have quoted and cited Buber's views concerning "Education and World-Views" at some length because I believe that they have implications for the teaching of social studies, history, and political science. Buber began by recognizing that men approach various subjects with world-views. This alone may be an important implication for educators. Are we not beguiling or deluding ourselves when we claim that a certain textbook, or a certain teacher's approach to history, social studies, or political science is "objective"? Would we not be wiser to begin where Buber begins: with the recognition that we do approach these subjects with definite "world-views"?

Secondly, whatever the importance of social studies and history for developing empathy with our fellow human beings, coming to understand our past, viewing one's self as part of a whole, developing pride in one's nation, I think that Buber would be unhappy with the way these subjects were taught unless they contained another factor. Does one meet the other group, or simply talk about it?

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[113] Ibid., p. 104.

Is it sufficient to read about the Indians? Should not the teacher endeavor to use whatever educational tools are at hand so that the students may meet them--film, a tour, a visit to a museum?

What about trying to comprehend or understand racial or inter-religious differences? I am inclined to believe that Buber would argue that it is not sufficient to seek to understand others with one's world-view in mind, by talking *about* the Negro, the Jew, the member of the other groups. Exchange visit~~s~~, where men truly meet one another, or tours to the slums of a city, or, perhaps, living with a slum family for a period of days, might be more in the spirit of Buber's thought.

Also, Buber recognized that one begins with a world-view, and does not only carry it into effect; one *authenticates* it by living it. It is not sufficient for anyone to *say* that he is in favor of peace, justice, brotherhood, or wholesome interhuman relationships. I believe that Buber would contend that one should *live* peacefully with others; conduct himself openly, directly, intensely with others as full, whole, human beings, confirming their otherness! Perhaps it would be in the spirit of Buber to say that one *justices*, *peaces*, *brotherhoods* just as one *loves*, for love is responsibility to the other as another that one meets!

c) I feel that Buber is within that stream of thought which argues that the school can educate to improve society. Buber said: "Social education . . . seeks to arouse and to develop in the minds of its pupils a spontaneity of fellowship. . . . This can be accomplished only by the complete overthrow of the political trend which nowadays dominates education throughout the world."[114] "True education for citizenship in a State is education for the effectuation of society."[115] Also, Buber was described thusly: ". . . he was consistently a doughty protagonist of social meliorism only if it retained a strongly religious basis; i.e., only if it quested for a regenerated man in a restructured society."[116]

The school can bring about the better society if the educator begins with the inner-transformation of people. There will not be transformation of the institutions of society--whether they be educational, social, political, or otherwise, until man is first transformed. To support this argument, let Buber speak for himself:

> Nations can be led to peace only by a people which has made peace a reality within itself. The realization of the spirit has a magnetic effect on mankind which despairs of the spirit. This is the meaning Isaiah's teachings have for us. When the mountain of the Lord's house is "established" on the reality of true community life, then, and only then, the nations will "flow" toward it. (Isaiah 2:2) There to learn peace in place of war.[117]

Furthermore, Friedman wrote:

> To establish true community man must rise in rebellion against the illusion of modern collectivism; he must rescue his real personal self from the domination of the collective. The first step in this rebellion must be to smash the false alternative of our epoch--that of individualism and collectivism. In its place he must put the vital, living knowledge that "the fundamental fact of human existence is man with man." This knowledge can

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[114] Ibid., p. 176.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Buber, Paths in Utopia, op. cit., introduction, p. x.

[117] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., p. 189.

> only be attained through man's personal engagement, through his entering with his whole being into dialogue. The central question for the fate of mankind, accordingly, the question on the answer to which the future of man as man depends, is the rebirth of dialogue. This means, above all, the overcoming of the massive existential mistrust in ourselves and others, for it is this that stands in the way of genuine relation between man and man.[118]

But how is all of this to be done?

Concerning that generation which does not hear the voice, which does not have that I-Thou relationship which leads to true inner-transformation, enabling the development of true community, Buber wrote:

> This generation must be made receptive for the Unforeseen which upsets all logical arrangements. Their ears and hearts must be open to the voice of the mystery which speaks in those utterances. We should not do all this with the purpose of preparing them to repeat the teachings and perform prescribed rites, but so that they may acquire the power to make the original choice, that--listening to the voice with that power--they may hear the message it has for their hour and their work; that they may learn to trust the voice, and through this trust, come to faith, to a faith of their own.[119]

I feel that it is necessary to add that the teacher creates the atmosphere where unified persons can possibly hear the voice!

d) What is the desirable size of a class? In Paths in Utopia, Buber argued that a genuine society is not an aggregate of essentially unrelated individuals, but it is built up of "little societies on the basis of communal life and of the association of these societies; and the mutual relations of the societies and their associations must be determined to the greatest possible extent by the social principle--the principle of inner cohesion, collaboration and mutual stimulation."[120]

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[118] Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, op. cit., pp. 146-147. The underlining is mine.

[119] Buber, Israel And The World, op. cit., p. 163.

Furthermore, Buber wrote: "An organic commonwealth . . . will never build itself up out of individuals but only out of small and even smaller communities; a nation is a community to the degree that it is a community of communities."[121]

Also, Buber stated: "The essential thing, however, is that the process of community-building shall run all through the relations of the communes with one another. Only a community of communities merits the title of Commonwealth."[122]

Whereas these comments specifically deal with Buber's social and political concepts, i.e., his declaration in favor of the rebirth of the commune,[123] I feel that his ideas have implications for education.

I contend that there is a correlation between Buber's views about regeneration of true society and the function of the school. If society is to be regenerated on the basis of small communities cooperating with one another, and if the school and social education bring about effectuation of the better world, then the school ought to be a unit composed of small groups which interact with one another.

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[120] Buber, Paths In Utopia, op. cit., p. 80.

[121] Ibid., p. 136.

[122] Ibid., p. 137.

[123] Ibid., p. 136.

I am inclined to believe that a "Buberian" school would be one wherein each teacher has three to five students. He interacts with them as individuals, confirming their presence, living wholly with them, selecting the effective world for them, enabling them to hear the voice, and permitting them to develop the attitude of the essential We. These small groups would interact one with another in large group activities, e.g., discussions, tours, visits, debates, etc. These large group units, which might be called "levels," would interreact with other "levels" in total school activities, e.g., auditorium activities, school-wide athletic functions, school-wide social functions, school-wide educational tours, field trips.

There is some indication that Buber might have approved of this approach. Friedman pointed out how Buber educated teachers to help new immigrants in Israel.[124] Such teachers not only learned the classics, the textbook, but were taught to meet the new immigrants as individuals and live with them in true community.[125] By this means, the immigrants were helped to know themselves, to live with others, to be unified and responsible people.[126]

e) The concept of the line of demarcation, drawing that line between the absolute value and its application, in a given situation, or between that which is good for all or good for an individual, has been discussed in the preceding chapter.[127] I shall not repeat that material here, but only point out that the concept of the line of demarcation raises the major problem which I have found in Buber's thought. Deciding how, when, and how far to apply an absolute value in a given social or individual situation, assumes that one has obtained knowledge of the absolute value. How? Through revelation, or through an I-Thou relationship, or through obtaining the sense of commandment, like the great character, earlier in the stages of one's development? Whether the answer is one of these alternatives, or another, we are back to the problem of distinguishing between a delusory and a valid I-Thou relationship.

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[124] Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, op. cit. pp. 181-183.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

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[127] See Chapter III, specifically the section subtitled, The Line of Demarcation.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Major Contributions to Philosophy of Education

a) Persons are important. One of Buber's major contributions to philosophy of education was his argument that books are secondary, men are more important![1] Whatever else education might attempt to do, real education is education of character; therefore, it must be education of people. Who possesses character? Books? Mathematical scales? Thus, subject matter is something that is transmitted to and for human beings. What is more important is that we understand the human being first, confirm his presence first, and utilize the teaching of subject matter to further this end.

b) Buber was optimistic with respect to the nature of man. Man has the ability to bring about, through social education, the better world. For Buber, education is not designed to educate the sin out of people: it is not designed to maintain the status quo; it is not intended to satisfy any legislature or power block. Rather, it is designed to help individuals unify themselves, to become true, whole, full, complete human beings who inter-relate with others.[2]

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[1] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

[2] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., pp. 115-117.

In The Knowledge of Man Buber stated that he believed that man is, as man, redeemable.[3] He had never met a person who was "irretrievably bad."[4] These concepts are significantly related to Hasidic teachings. The Hasidim taught that there are sparks of the divine implanted within everything, which man need only redeem, allow to blossom forth, in order to bring forth a better world. Buber's thinking is permeated with this spirit of Hasidism.[5]

Buber's hope and trust that the human being can redeem himself, create a better world, also appeared in the concluding paragraph of one of his more inspiring writings.

> The hope for this hour depends upon the hopers themselves, upon ourselves. I mean by this: upon those among us who feel most deeply the sickness of present-day man and will speak in his name the word without which no healing takes place: I will live.[6]

c) Buber also stated: "The hope for this hour depends upon the renewal of dialogical immediacy between man . . ."[7] This statement, so closely related to his optimistic views concerning man and man's ability to build the better world, points to a third major contribution, the most obvious one, the dialogical. Buber's emphasis upon the primary fact of human existence, that man lives with man, is of great importance for education, as he clearly wrote and argued in "Education" and "Education of Character."

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[3] Buber, The Knowledge of Man, op. cit., p. 28.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, op. cit., pp. 16-23.

[6] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., p. 228.

[7] Ibid.

There are certain fundamental beliefs in Buber's I-Thou philosophy.[8] According to Friedman, they can be summarized thus: "the reality of the turning which puts a limit to man's movement away from God."[9]

Furthermore, because of these beliefs, Buber defined evil "as the predominance of the World of It to the exclusion of relation, and he has conceived of the redemption of evil as taking place in the primal movement of the turning which brings man back to God and back to solidarity of relation with man in the world."[10]

d) The above succinct summary of the fundamental beliefs of the I-Thou, closely related to his optimistic view of man, and his religious views leads to the following conclusion: Buber is a profoundly religious thinker. Of course, one must remember his definition of religion.[11] As the above citations from Friedman point out, Martin Buber's concept of the I-Thou relationship is significantly related to his concept of religious. I feel that it is a misreading of Buber to comprehend the I-Thou relationship as only an intense, personal humanistic encounter without giving due cognizance to the fact that Buber argued that every I-Thou relationship is also a glimpse of the eternal Thou.

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[8] Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, op. cit., p. 76.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Buber, "Replies to My Critics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 742.

Hence, I interpret Buber's statement that all education is education of character[12] to mean that all education is also religious education.

e) Also, Buber's thinking is essentially communal. Genuine education of character is education for community.[13]

The importance of Buber's emphasis of community, insofar as he is an existentialist, is underlined by comparing his view that genuine education must be education for community, with a point made by Kneller. Kneller argued that one of existentialism's weaknesses is the fact that it does not sufficiently emphasize community. He stated: "How can one attain the epitome of human existence if the act is performed in isolation or in alienation from one's fellow man? One cannot master one's self without mastering one's environment. . . ."[14] I believe that if Kneller had read Buber's "Education of Character," Kneller would have understood that here was one existentialist who realized that man does not live alone or in total isolation: he lives with others, indeed, he comes to be what he is as a result of living with others; he lives in community, even as he seeks and strives to perfect community.

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[12] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 104.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Kneller, op. cit., p. 154.

f) Buber pointed out the evil, the danger, of the scientific society, of the purely scientific orientation to life.[15]

However, it must be emphasized that Buber was aware of the importance of the world of the past, of science. He stated that no person can live only in the bare present, the I-Thou relationship.[16] Science, mathematics, geometry, physics--all are important if they are understood as the past, the organized structure of thought.

However, Buber argued that the world of It is evil if it is conceived to be the totality of thought, or if the person is sacrificed to It world.[17] Hence, we should understand that undergirding every scientific discovery is some moment of intuition or confrontation. Therefore, all essential knowledge begins with an I-Thou encounter, and is contained in an enduring concept.[18]

Buber's dissatisfaction with a purely scientific orientation to life, and to questions of the meaning of human existence, is shared by other existentialists. Kneller, e.g., stated: "A . . . contribution of existentialism originates in its protest against sterile abstractions, pure logic and objective absolutes, substituting instead an emphasis upon the concrete and the individual. Life is indeed larger than logic: human existence cannot be measured merely by a concept of human existence. . . ."[19]

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[15] Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, op. cit., p. 13.

[16] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 34.

[17] Diamond, op. cit., p. 22.

[18] Buber, "Replies to My Critics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 692.

Similarly Morris stated:

> If in the privacy of my own subjectivity I feel certain feelings, if I have certain awarenesses which to me are authentic and laden with personal meaning for my own project, I should or should not allow these awarenesses to flow into my teaching of the young on the ground that they cannot be completely shared by the community. Must an awareness become public property in order to be human? The question is ridiculous on its face. In the I-Thou relation which the existentialist sees prevailing between teacher and learner, awarenesses wither under the glare of publicity: they are destroyed by becoming the play things of group dynamics and sociometry. . . .[20]

I feel that Buber would agree with many of these assertions. The meaning embraced through the I-Thou meeting includes far more than the scientific It structure of knowledge.

Implications for Educational Practice

The meeting is educational.[21] One of the chief achievements of the teacher-student meeting is trust.[22] Recalling Friedman's argument that the biblical concept of trust, emuna, undergirds Buber's ethical and religious thought,[23] it seems clear that the teacher who develops an atmosphere permitting true and whole human inter-relationships to be, achieving trust, is teaching ethics and religion.

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[19] Kneller, op. cit., p. 157.

[20] Morris, op. cit., p. 101.

[21] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 107.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Friedman, "The Bases of Buber's Ethics," Library of Living Philosophers, op. cit., p. 199.

The concept of trust is related to the idea of responsibility.[24] The teacher, the effective selector of the given world,[25] creates the atmosphere of a classroom by responding to the students as they are, by confirming their presence. Furthermore, responsibility implies responding to the other not only as that which he is at the moment, but also as that which he can become with awareness of the divine within him.[26]

Related to this is the idea that the student-teacher relationship ought to be one of master and disciple.[27] The master-disciple relationship was one of responsibility, genuine love, responsibility to another.[28] Thus, a major educational implication of Buber's thinking for actual classroom instruction is this: whatever the teacher does, and the situation helps determine how and what the teacher should do,[29] the teacher's primary function is to develop those human relationships with his or her pupils which are characterized by genuine love, responsibility, trust, and confidence. This implies meeting the students as persons and using the text to bring about meeting.

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[24] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., pp. 92, 98.

[25] Ibid., p. 101.

[26] Ibid., p. 102.

[27] Ibid., p. 90.

[28] Ibid., p. 92.

[29] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., pp. 99, 206.

Trust can also develop from a situation of conflict. Indeed, Buber argued that conflicts in a classroom are tests of the teacher.[30] If there is a situation in which the students know that they can respond to the other as other, and be confirmed in their otherness, they develop different world-views.

b) Another major implication of Buber's thought to education is his concept of the third alternative, to those of the funnel or pump teacher.[31] In his application of Buber's thinking to the education of art, Herbert Read emphasized this point.

> The all-seeing understanding, the constant anticipation of needs, the selective function of Buber's teacher, give us a new and more constructive conception of tenderness. We escape from the pampered atmosphere . . . into a functional and constructive world; and at the same time we avoid the destructive effects of crude application of power or authority. Buber's conception of the teacher's guiding and selective function allows us to construe tenderness as an active agency instead of a passive emotional state.[32]

c) The teacher _must_ deal with controversial matters, with the hopes of bringing about greater interpersonal relationships, and consequently, a living ethos. Buber would agree, I think, with Morris who contended that moral and ethical questions are not "too touchy or too personal for classroom discussion."[33] "By insulating the learner from thinking about and feeling the intensity of explosive questions, the parent and the parent-intimidated teacher cannot possibly awaken a youngster to his existential freedom and to his sense of individual responsibility for directing his own moral life."[34]

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[30] Buber, _Between Man and Man_, _op. cit._, p. 107.

[31] _Ibid._, p. 89.

[32] Herbert Read, _Education Through Art_ (London: Faber and Faber, Shenval Press, 1947), p. 286.

[33] Morris, _op. cit._, p. 119.

d) Again, I feel that Buber would agree with Morris concerning subject matter for the classroom. Morris contended that there are certain kinds of "pre-certified" subject matters proposed by the problem solving method, the Great Books adherents, or the proponents of the discovery method.[35] The existentialist opposes these and other conceptions of education.

> The young, in these conceptions of education, are to be uses; they are to be employed on behalf of (1) a prepared, precertified idea of "human nature" which they are expected to fulfill, (2) an objective body of extant subject matter which they are expected to absorb, (3) an objective concept of a culture's ways and means of living which they are expected to assume, or (4) a set of dispositions, deemed fundamental, which are to be formed in them and for which they are expected to become the living vehicles.[36]

For Buber, the subject matter of education is man with man. Any curriculum, any text, should enable men to meet men as men, and should not be studied simply for knowledge's sake itself.[37]

e) There is no one way, no prescription, that flows from Buber's teachings that shows how the teacher is to guide the students to the I-Thou relationship. Buber himself stated that there is no prescription to the I-Thou, and none that leads from it.[38] All we know about the I-Thou is the going out to it and the meeting.[39]

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[34] _Ibid_.

[35] _Ibid_., p. 108.

[36] _Ibid_.

[37] Friedman, _Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue_, _op. cit_., pp. 181-183.

However, accepting the present, the moment, appears to be a basic requirement for having an I-Thou relationship.[40] We can never be sure what will happen in the given moment; there is always the element of surprise.[41] Hence, the teacher, should strive to permit a spontaneous atmosphere to exist in the classroom so that the moment can be encountered, the Thou can be encountered. One can hold himself open for presentness.[42] Can it be? Buber, I feel, would say: "Live it and see!"

The Problem of Criterion and Judgment

I have pointed out what critics of Buber consider to be a major problem: determining or judging between a delusory or true I-Thou relationship. Is there a criterion for doing so?

It is my view that if Buber were to do so he would no longer be Buber. He has argued that he has no system, that he has no definite yes or no, that one always has the element of risk in the decisions he makes, and that one always walks the "narrow ridge."[43] To establish some criterion for definitely determining the validity of an I-Thou relationship or the falseness thereof would be to put Buber into a category into which he personally did not want to be placed.

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[38] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 111.

[39] Ibid., p. 76.

[40] Ibid., pp. 78-79.

[41] Buber, Pointing The Way, op. cit., p. 206.

[42] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

[43] Buber, Between Man and Man, op. cit., p. 184.

Secondly, Buber's I-Thou relationship need not necessarily be an encounter or a meeting which can be analyzed or judged with a criterion based on reason. Buber himself stated in I And Thou that neither the existence of mutuality or the existence of God could ever be proved.[44] In Eclipse of God he contended that mutuality and the meaning of the I-Thou relationship can only be lived.[45]

I have cited these two statements to buttress the view that to ask Buber to give a criterion may be to ask the impossible--there is no criterion established by reason whereby the validity of the I-Thou relationship can be proved or disproved! There is no criterion established by reason whereby Buber could prove the existence of God or disprove it! When one leaves the mystery of revelation, of the I-Thou relationship at its highest, one simply has a sense of sending: go forth and live![46]

Furthermore, the truths which Buber discussed may be truths that are higher than reason. For this very reason there can be no criterion established by reason whereby one can say that the truths are or are not such truths. R. G. Smith succinctly pointed this out:

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[44] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., p. 137.

[45] Buber, Eclipse of God, op. cit., p. 35.

[46] Buber, I And Thou, op. cit., pp. 109-112.

> This confirming of the other reaches its height in what Buber calls "the event of making present." The fullness of this event is rare, and it is worth noting that all Buber's care and delicate analysis of the category and history of the inter-human is not only dealing with an event that is not commonly found in its full realization, but it is also attempting to express something that by its nature cannot be fully expressed. It is thus that Buber should refer . . . to the seventh epistle of Plato. We hear of the impossibility of giving verbal expression to "the subject" (by which Plato appears to mean "the nature of reality regarded as a mystic vision").[47]

In the final analysis, Buber might say that one takes the existential posture, the I-Thou, toward life, or not. If he does, and if he chooses to do so as Martin Buber did, then many of the implications which flow from Buber's thinking would be valid for education. However, if one is a rationalist, a radical empiricist, or an experimentalist, and does not begin with the existential basis of Martin Buber, then he would find difficulty in applying Buber's thinking to education because he would find problems with Buber as an existentialist.

It has not been the purpose of this thesis to decide whether Buber's religious existentialism is or is not valid. It has been my intention to manifest what Martin Buber wrote, the problems, specifically that of criterion, one must answer if one is to accept his position, and also, what are the implications of his views for education.

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[47] Smith, op. cit., p. 30. Underlining is mine.

I conclude with Buber's self depiction.

> I, myself, have no "doctrine." My function is to point out realities of this order. He who expects of me a teaching other than a pointing out of this character, will always be disillusioned. And it would seem to me, indeed, that in this hour of history the crucial thing is not to possess a fixed doctrine, but rather to recognize eternal reality and out of its depth to be able to face the reality of the present. No way can be pointed to in this desert night. One's purpose must be to help men of today to stand fast, with their souls in readiness, until the dawn breaks and a path becomes visible where none suspected it.[48]

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[48] Martin Buber, For The Sake of Heaven, translated by Ludwig Lewisohn, (New York: Meridian Books, 1961), p. xiii.

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